















# ZION'S PATHWAY:

OR

SOME OF THE DOCTRINES, DUTIES AND DANGERS  
OF THE CHRISTIAN PILGRIM DELINEATED.

In the way of righteousness is life ; and in the pathway thereof there is  
no death. . . . . Proverbs, 12 : 28.



BY REV. TIMOTHY ALDEN TAYLOR, A. M.

BOSTON:  
PERKINS & WHIPPLE.  
1850.

BR125  
T35

Entered according to act of Congress, in the year 1850,  
BY TIMOTHY A. TAYLOR,  
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

OLD DICKINSON OFFICE, C. C. P. MOODY, PRINTER,  
52 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON.

LC Control Number



tmp96 027374

7

# Dedication,

---

TO

REV OLIVER A. TAYLOR,

HIS ELDEST BROTHER;

TO

REV. RUFUS TAYLOR,

HIS ASSOCIATE BROTHER;

AND TO

REV. JEREMIAH TAYLOR,

HIS YOUNGEST BROTHER;

THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

## NOTICE.

---

SOME portions of this volume were published in a religious periodical more than ten years ago ; and at least one half of it has, in various forms, already been issued, embracing the greater part of two small books, by the author.

A few inaccuracies have escaped timely notice. For instance, on page 52, near the bottom, the terms *former* and *latter* must be transposed in order to give the meaning intended ; on page 141, line 5 from the top, "*he hath,*" should read, *we have* ; "*more,*" on page 410, line 2d from the top, ought to be *none*.

# CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
<b>THERE IS A GOD.</b>	13
Preliminary Suggestions .....	13
Proof from Human Existence.....	15
Proof from the Complexity of Human Existence .....	16
Proof from other Existences on the Earth.....	18
Proof from the Earth itself.....	20
Proof from the Solar System.....	23
Proof from the Universe.....	24
New proofs constantly elicited by Science.....	25
Proof every where.....	25
<b>THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.</b>	26
Finite Creatures can know nothing, a priori, respecting the Infinite Creator.....	26
Classification of these Attributes.....	28
<b>THE ONENESS OF GOD.</b>	29
What is the testimony of Reason respecting the Divine Unity ? ....	30
The Bible View of this Attribute.....	32
<b>THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.</b>	35
<b>THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD.</b>	40
The Term Defined.....	40
Scripture Testimony.....	41
This Attribute enters into our Ideas of God.....	42
An Objection considered.....	43
This Attribute a Source of Joy.....	46
A fearful Attribute for the Wicked.....	47



THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.	49
THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.	50
A Mistake corrected .....	51
God intended we should see Him every where.....	54
GOD IS LOVE.	59
The fact viewed with reference to the Past.....	60
With reference to the Present.....	62
With reference to the Future.....	62
The relation of this Truth to Evangelical Doctrines .....	64
The Use made of it by Errorists.....	65
This Divine Attribute harmonizes with the others.....	66
WORSHIP GOD.	67
ATHEISM.	69
Theories of Atheists.....	70
The Object of Atheists.....	71
JESUS CHRIST.	73
Christ was a Man.....	73
Christ was more than a Man.....	74
Christ was truly God.....	75
The Scriptures call Christ God.....	76
The Scriptures ascribe Eternal Existence to Christ.....	76
Almighty Power is attributed to Christ.....	77
Christ is represented as Omniscient.....	77
The Scriptures teach us that Christ is Omnipresent.....	78
Divine Honors are given to Christ.....	78
CHRIST'S TEMPTATION.	79
CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.	85
THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.	91
Place and Time .....	91
The Cause of this Agony.....	93

## WHY WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED? 97

It was not for any Crime actually committed by Him.....	97
He could have saved Himself .....	98
He died to redeem Man.....	98
He satisfied Justice .....	100
He paid our Debt.....	100
Sometimes it is said that our Sins were imputed to Christ.....	101
Heaven is open to all Men.....	101

## THE CRUCIFIXION SCENE. 104

## THE MEDIATORSHIP OF CHRIST. 111

Its relation to Individuals .....	111
Its Kingly Character.....	113
Its Termination.....	119

## THE FIRST RESURRECTION. 126

## BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD. 131

## THE HOLY SPIRIT. 134

The Personality of the Spirit .....	134
The Operations of the Spirit.....	138
The Argument summed up.....	140
The Doctrine of the Trinity comprehensively expressed.....	141
General Observations on the Trinity.....	142

## THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD. 144

The Devil is not the Author of the Bible.....	144
Wicked Men did not produce the Bible.....	144
Good men did not originate the Bible.....	146
Holy Angels are not the Authors of the Bible.....	147
The Bible appears to be the Word of God.....	148
The Bible claims to be the Word of God.....	148
The Bible is proved to be the Word of God.....	149

## HINTS IN REGARD TO REVELATION. 150

Science and Revelation.....	150
Doubting Revelation is irrational.....	152

Right Moral Affections requisite for a Reception of Revelation.....	153
Speculation on Revelation is Dangerous.....	154
Examples .....	154

#### INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES. 157

Definition of the Term .....	157
The Promise of Christ .....	158
The Fulfilment of the Promise .....	162
Evidence of Inspiration from Particular Passages.....	163
The Old Testament.....	165
Objections considered .....	166

#### TWO ARGUMENTS FOR SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. 170

First Argument .....	170
Second Argument .....	171

#### MANNER OF SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES. 180

The Temper of Mind .....	180
The Province of Reason.....	181
A Prayerful Frame of Mind is requisite .....	183
Closing Appeals.....	184

#### ANCIENT SAINTS AND A FUTURE STATE. 186

A Concluding Remark .....	198
---------------------------	-----

#### INFIDELS. 186

They are Corrupt.....	198
They have done abominable Works.....	203
In furtherance of their direful purposes, Infidels have, to the utmost of their ability, corrupted the Literature of the World.....	204
Again; the Facts of Christianity are grossly perverted by Infidels.	205
There is none that doeth good .....	208
Infidelity cannot harm the Church.....	211
Infidelity predicted .....	211
The Infidel's Recompense .....	212
Baptized Infidelity.....	213
Infidel's boast of Reason, vain.....	214
The New Phases .....	215

DEATH OF INFIDELS.	216
Saurin's Description.....	217
Death of Voltaire.....	218
Death of Hume.....	219
Death of Hobbes and Gibbons.....	220
Death of Tindal and Altamont.....	220
Death of Thomas Paine.....	221
Deaths in an Infidel Party.....	221
The Remedy for Infidelity.....	222

THE SABBATH.	223
The Patriarchs and the Sabbath ?.....	224
No Manna on the Sabbath.....	226
The Law from Sinai.....	228
Objections considered.....	229
A summary of Arguments for the Sabbath.....	232

CHRIST AND THE SABBATH.	234
The Miracles performed on the Sabbath.....	234
His Disciples and the Cornfield..	239
Change of the Day.....	243
Is Paul at variance with Christ ?.....	246

MAN'S NEED OF THE SABBATH ILLUSTRATED.	249
Who break the Sabbath ?.....	255
An Inference.....	260
But one Sabbath in a week.....	262

HYMN.	263
-------	-----

THE SANCTUARY.	263
Order of Public Worship.....	266
Posture in Prayer.....	268

HEARING THE GOSPEL.	270
Hear attentively.....	270
Hear without Prejudice.....	273
Hear to receive the greatest Profit.....	274
Hear with Gratitude.....	276

Hear with the Last Judgment in view.....	276
The Sabbath School .....	278

### THE MINISTRY. 281

The title Bishop.....	283
THE PASTOR — His first duty.....	284
The Example of Paul.....	286
A Second Specification in regard to the Pastor's Duty .....	296
Some Dangers attendant on the Pastoral office specified.....	298
The Support of Pastors.....	303
A Mournful Fact.....	306
A single Instance.....	309

### REVIVALS OF RELIGION. 310

The Importance of Revivals.....	310
The Source of Revivals.....	316

### CHRIST'S LAST COMMAND. 322

### CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE. 328

Some of its Characteristics.....	328
The Reward of this Benevolence.....	331
Ways for the Exercise of this Benevolence.....	334
This Benevolence too little exercised .....	335

### SILVER AND GOLD ARE THE LORD'S. 336

### MAN CONSIDERED MORALLY ; OR DEPRAVITY. 341

### THE NEW BIRTH ESSENTIAL TO THE ATTAINMENT OF HEAVEN. 352

What is to be understood by the New Birth ? .....	352
The Ground of the Necessity of the New Birth.....	355
Two Specifications .....	356

### GOD THE AUTHOR OF THE NEW BIRTH. 362

The Position Illustrated.....	362
The Mode of Renewal .....	367
Why does God renew Persons ? .....	373

THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION. 376

What it is not.....	376
What it is .....	379
The Doctrine established by the Scriptures .....	382
Election is Personal .....	384
A word to Opposers .....	386
Certain Objections.....	389

HUMAN AND DIVINE AGENCIES ARE COÖPERATIVE. 390
Deductions .....
397

WHAT THE SINNER MUST DO TO BE SAVED. 400

REPENTANCE. 405

True and False discriminated .....	406
Examples of True Repentance.....	408
Examples of the False.. .....	410

THE FORGIVEN SINNER. 414

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN. 421

SANCTIFICATION. 428

The great Agent in it.....	431
Means necessary .....	432
Evidence of Sanctification.....	433

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE. 435

GRIEVING THE SPIRIT. 443

Ways in which the Spirit may be grieved.....	444
Consequences of grieving the Spirit .....	447

PRAYER. 450

Prayer as a Duty.....	451
Necessary Qualifications.....	452
Motives to Pray.....	458
An Objection.....	459

CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION.	460
Its Nature explained.....	460
The Duty of thus submitting .....	463
HEAVEN.	466
HELL.	473
THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.	479
The Resurrection viewed in the Light of Reason.....	482
Attributes of the Raised Body .....	485
The Time of the Resurrection .....	487
Particular Objections noticed.....	488
THE FINAL JUDGMENT.	490
The Design of the Judgment .....	492
The Doctrine highly practical .....	493
A Caution .....	498
Disappointment at the Last Day .....	498
Christ is Judge.....	499



# ZION'S PATHWAY.

---

THERE IS A GOD.

## *Preliminary Suggestions.*

THERE either is or there is not a God. One exists or does not exist. Either that proposition which asserts his existence is true, or the one which denies it is true. What is now true, in respect to that existence or non-existence, ever has been and ever will be true. No change of circumstances, or lapse of time, can make that false which is true in the abstract, nor that true which is false in the abstract. Belief or unbelief has no influence to change the nature of truth. One may firmly believe in the existence of a supreme Being, and another may not believe that such a Being exists; yet neither the belief of the one nor the denial of the other has any effect upon the *fact* of the divine existence or non-existence.

If every intelligent creature in the universe should *renounce* the idea that there is a God, or should all with united voice *proclaim* it, the renunciation or the proclamation could no more affect the absolute truth in the case, than would the add-

ing of an ultimate molecule of matter affect the sensible weight of the material universe, or the millionth part of a drop of water perceptibly increase the depth of the ocean.

It is the part of wisdom, then, to approach the question, Is there a God? with candor, and carefully to consider the evidence which is above us, around us, beneath us, and within us; since, if there be a God, evidence of his existence must appear somewhere, if it do not everywhere. If there be a God, it is important that we should be aware of the fact; and if there be none, we ought to know the fact. The question proposed cannot be one that may be turned aside with indifference by any rational being. It takes hold upon the very existence of every intelligent creature. With the answer, are connected the dearest hopes, or the most distressing fears, of all men. The only alternative for man, is eternal existence or eternal oblivion; and which is his destiny, can never be for certainty determined, till it is known whether or not there be a God.\* Indifference, here, is irrational — is brutish. If there be a God, one touch of his finger, one glance of his eye, may drive us into outer darkness and into endless despair.

---

\* On the supposition that there is no God, it does not follow of course that human beings will not exist after their present life ceases. Why should the atheist believe that death will terminate his being? If *Chance* now control the affairs of this world, it will doubtless do the same for the future; and if it first gave the atheist life, it may perpetuate that life in another state of existence, without permitting, for a moment, the cessation of consciousness. Or, admitting that the entire *being* dies when the body becomes lifeless, no one can prove that *Chance* will not raise the dead. If, by such an agency, the atheist is sent into the world, and then is sent out of the world, he may, for ought he can show, be returned again, after the lapse of ages. Yea, there may be eternal alternations of the giving and taking away of life. Does *Chance* rule? then is man's condition subject to the mere freaks of the most terrible tyranny. Without the least shadow of a reason, he has been ushered upon this theatre of action; without reason, he is to be driven back whence he came, and perhaps again to be recalled. *Chance* may torment him forever.

*Proof from Human Existence.*

The fact of my existence is a phenomenon in nature for which there must be a cause, and a cause sufficient to produce the result. It is an obvious dictate of common sense, that every effect must have an adequate cause. Now that I did not create myself, is certain; nor is the question of my origin divested of difficulty, by saying that I am descended from progenitors; their existence is to be accounted for. That they had parents, does not remove the objection. Go back in a direct line for a thousand generations, and all you have done is to go back; run through another thousand generations, and then you have to account for the existence of the first pair; go back as far as you please, still the same phenomenon of human existence is to be accounted for. None will maintain that the human family has been eternally in existence. Did it originate itself? That were impossible, for the supposition makes the race to exist before it existed. Did human beings come to possess their present natures by degrees, having been gradually converted into what they now are from apes,\* or something else? If so, we must account for the existence of those apes, or that something else. Nor will this be found an easy task. These must have brought themselves into existence, or have been created by an agency out of themselves. It is absurd to ascribe their origin to themselves; for in that case they are made to exist and act before they existed.

But there is another difficulty. Species never change. The world does not furnish an instance of an animal, or a plant, abandoning its own species and assuming another. Could it,

---

\* There is a class of persons who seem exceedingly desirous to prove that the human family had an origin of this sort. When meeting with such arguers, we are half inclined to admit their position in its application to themselves. Verily they appear worthy of no better parentage.

however, be shown that species do change, and that the human species was once merely animal, then an adequate cause must be assigned for the change. To affirm that it was the result of *chance* will not answer; common sense condemns such an attempt at evasion. There is an effect, and a cause must be assigned adequate to its production. How, then, shall the simple question, respecting the origin of my existence, be answered? Can it ever be satisfactorily explained, without admitting the existence of an infinite God?

*Proof from the Complexity of Human Existence.*

Man is not a simple existence; he has a compound nature, and sustains many complicated and peculiar relations. How are these to be expounded? Why are we part matter, and part mind? And whence the marvellous union of the two? Surely, matter has no natural affinities for mind, nor has mind any for matter. In man are united two elements, which reciprocally influence each the other,—always, however, harmonizing, still permanently distinct,—operating and coöperating, but never losing their distinctive characteristics; yet how one is affected by the other no human being can explain. On examining the material frame, and analyzing the anatomical structure, we find in every part marks of *design*. The clearest evidence appears that a perfect plan was formed, and that each particular part is adapted to carry out the plan. To exhibit all these wonderful contrivances would require a complete dissection of a human body. A volume might be written respecting the hand, another concerning the eye. Nothing can surpass the beauty of form, nicety of design, and perfection of execution, in the organ of vision. It is a world of wonders, and affords unequivocal evidence of being the workmanship of an infinite designer. Mark its adaptation to the external world. By the simple admission of rays from

the sun, an image is formed of an object upon the retina, and by that means the object itself becomes visible. Why an image should be formed at all, but more especially, why an idea of the object should be conveyed to the mind by it, the philosophy of all past ages has been unable to explain; nor can it be accounted for, except on the admission that an infinitely wise God was its maker.

The *heart* is an instrument of remarkable parts and powers. Who can examine it, and not see unequivocal marks of design? If there were design, then of course the existence of a designer must be admitted. It is the centre of vitality, in the human system. By its perpetual dilations and contractions, the blood, conveying nutriment, is driven into every part of the human system. The will of man has little or no control over its motions, which continue from the commencement of life till the breath leaves the body.

Contemplate the organs of speech. Why is man the only being, of all that move on the earth, capable of conversing by articulate sounds? Did aught but a great Designer constitute the difference between him and other creatures?

Not to enter farther into specifications, suffice it to say, that everywhere, in the human frame, are the most undeniable tokens of adaptations of parts to constitute a whole. Not a mistake has been committed in the plan or in the execution.

We see how man's body could not have begun to exist; it did not originate itself; chance did not give it a being; it is no modification of another order of agents; whence is it? The watch before me, I know, must have been the product of some artificer. To doubt it, would be violating the dictates of common sense. Shall I believe that the human frame, which is a million times more complicated than a watch, had no artificer? I cannot; the laws of the mind will not admit it. I am compelled to conclude that it had a maker and



builder, and that he could have been none but an infinite Being;—the knowledge and wisdom requisite are so great, that we can set no limits to them. Every effect must have a cause adequate to produce it; the human body is an effect,—hence there must be a cause, an adequate cause; no agent less than that designated GOD can be the cause; therefore, God is the cause. To be the cause, he must exist—wherefore, there is a God.

As yet, I have not dwelt upon man's intellectual endowments. These are more wonderful than the arrangements of the body. Intellect! Whence is it? Can it be from any other source than a Being of unlimited power? Search for proof of a contrary nature,—it is not to be found. Intellect is an effect,—every effect must have an adequate cause, and nothing less than an infinite Intelligence can be its cause. Nor can we account for our moral nature, but by attributing it to the same source.

*Proof from other Existences on the Earth.*

Man is but a single link in a chain of vast extent, of vast extremes. From him, the most noble being on earth, is a regular series of gradations, to the most simple of all animal existences. It is not, however, a series in which there is the least change of species from one generation to another. The orders remain as they were originally ranked. Thousands of years have produced no alterations, except in modifying varieties of the same species.

Leaving the lower ranks of the animal kingdom, we enter by descending upon that of the vegetable. Here, too, are wide extremes. The cedar rears its head where the lightnings are at home, and the thunder drives its car; that is one extreme; in the other, we see the rush bowing before every breeze, and the moss mantling the wall. Through all this

range perfect symmetry and system prevail. Nothing is out of place. If there be a plan, and one must be blind not to see it, then also there has been a planner, that carried out the plan. Who can he have been? No finite being, certainly; for one thus limited could not have formed and executed such a plan as we know must have been laid and is executed. The eye cannot turn in any direction, amid the inanimate realm of existences, without perceiving the most decisive marks of intelligent design. It is a settled fact, that the more minutely the works of nature are scrutinized, the more manifest do these marks appear. Visit the mountain oak, and ask it why its roots strike so deep, and why its arms extend so wide. It replies: the latter is to inhale the air and to catch the dew; and the former is to secure me amid the storms and winds that would otherwise upturn me. The elephant is adapted to the clime which he inhabits. Lions are found only in countries fitted to their nature. Every section of the globe has its own peculiar species of animals, and each animal is furnished with means of support, pleasure, and self-defence. Not an instance can be found, in which a creature has been brought into existence and left destitute in these respects. Each understands how to procure necessary food, and each is provided with some means for protecting itself. The elephant defies all enemies by his great strength; the deer seeks safety in flight; the asp infuses a deadly poison; the bee is armed with a sting; the Alpine marmot appoints a sentinel to watch, while he is in search of food, or is taking pastime on his rocky eminence. In constructing their habitations, animals display a degree of ingenuity and sagacity which can be accounted for only by admitting that they have been endowed with instincts by an intelligent Being, who adapted them to their respective conditions. Examine the houses of the *beavers*, the artificial hills of the African *termites*, and the hexagonal cells formed by the bee.



There are fixed laws running through the vegetable kingdom. A limb on one side of a tree is ordinarily balanced by another on the other side; and this arrangement is adapted to the law of gravity. The exact harmony which characterizes all things in the world of nature, proves that there was a presiding power, that planned and perfected the whole, and reason demands that we see here him whose name is God.

*Proof from the Earth itself.*

Thus far I have dwelt upon objects which stand on the earth's surface; those, obviously, began to exist since the formation of this globe. Whence came this material frame, the earth? The ancient philosophers disputed whether or not matter is eternal. Modern philosophy has settled the question, by showing that it cannot be eternal; yet some, in these days, attempt to account for the existence of our world by theories too absurd and ridiculous ever to have received the respect of a pagan philosopher, or even of a pagan fool.

But suppose we admit, for the sake of argument, the eternity of matter; none will contend that it has existed in its present form from eternity; and the question is to be answered, how came this material frame to exist in its present form? Shall we discourse pompously upon the influence of gravity, and of the powers of motion? There is no proof that *gravity* is an essential element of matter. "It is a property which we have no right to call necessary, but every reason to suppose is universal."\* If, however, gravity be an essential property of matter, what does the fact prove respecting the physical world? Did that *simple law* fit up this wonderful frame? Has it spread out the heavens, and adorned them

---

\* Whewell.

with beauty ? As well might we speak of common household articles being manufactured by the law of gravity ; of books being printed and bound by it ; yea, of all that is done on earth being performed by that alone.

No evidence can be produced that *motion* is an essential property of matter. Were it so, the fact would not account at all for the existence of the earth in its present form. Mere motion would do nothing toward it. Let us suppose that matter was originally endowed with the properties of gravity and motion ; does this supposition enable us to account for the earth's *present* appearance ? By gravity, all particles tend toward a common centre ; by motion, each particle would seek to move in some direction, but not necessarily in any particular one ; hence, much confusion would arise, at the outset, among the numerous moving particles. In order to see how they could ever come to any agreement among themselves, as to the direction in which they must move, and where they should stop, we shall be compelled to ascribe intelligence to each particle. This, however, does not relieve us ; there must have been infinite intelligence and power presiding over the whole, or eternal confusion would reign among them. We are necessitated to attribute to matter attributes such as we ascribe to God, or admit the existence of a supreme Being.

The supposition that our earth was originally a fragment of some exploded planet, does not remove the difficulty connected with the question, how came it to exist in its present form ? By what means was the exploded planet *made* a planet at all, and what caused it to explode ? What arrested the flying fragment, and gave it a globular shape, smoothed its surface, and converted it into a habitation for living creatures ? Surely, none but an infinite Agent could accomplish these things.

To what conclusion does an examination of the physical structure of the earth lead us ? Its soil is a compound ;

every compound is made up of component parts, which once existed in a separate state. A compound always implies a compounder. Who united these ingredients? Who could do it? Certainly, no being less than a perfect God. A power inferior to his could not have forced together so many heterogeneous substances, and combined them into a harmonious whole, such as is visible even to an atheist's eyes.

A considerable portion of the globe is water, and no theory can account for its formation and distribution which does not ascribe it to an almighty Creator.

From what source, too, came the atmosphere, surrounding the earth, and extending several miles' distance from its surface? Nature has no apparatus for producing it. Design is manifest, in thus enveloping this globe in such a fluid. It is not so connected with the earth as that the latter *must* be surrounded by it, for other planets may and, perhaps, do exist without an atmosphere. Yet it is essential to the life of animals and the growth of vegetables; neither can long exist without it. The atmosphere is a special provision. Who, then, is the provider? Could any being less than a God of unlimited ability have prepared it?

As in the human system, so in the structure of the planet on which we dwell; each part is fitted to make up a grand whole. Where can we discover a deficiency? What necessary want of man, or of other creatures, is not fully met? The *particular* laws which regulate the animal and vegetable kingdoms, are in strict accordance with those laws of nature which are designated *general*; and the general laws were evidently appointed with special reference to those *arrangements* which were subsequent to their establishment, and are called *particular*. The eye of man never looked upon any production of art, wherein every separate part served for the completion of the whole, more clearly than does every part of this material frame serve to constitute a perfect world. If

there be apparent exceptions, investigation proves them to be so only in appearance ; or, at most, departures from the original intent. Changes, in some respects, have evidently occurred in the physical creation.

*Proof from the Solar System.*

Suppose, now, that from the special consideration of the earth, we turn to a contemplation of the solar system. Here we at once perceive, that while the earth is complete in all its parts, is a perfect whole, yet itself is only one body in a system, of which the sun is the centre, and around which, as a centre, several bodies revolve. Hence, had we hitherto in our investigations been able to account for all the phenomena which have come under our notice, without admitting the existence of an infinite Creator, we should be here met with insuperable difficulties in maintaining the no-God theory. It is utterly impossible for us to begin to explain the operations of the solar system by any knowledge of matter. System implies a systematizer ; or, to revert to first principles, every effect must have an adequate cause. The solar system is an effect, for which such cause is to be assigned. But what is an adequate cause for the production of this effect ? Why stands the sun in the centre ? Wherefore revolve the planets about it ? Attraction would naturally bring them all to itself, as a centre. It is found that the motions of the planets are regular, pursuing each its own path, performing each its own revolutions, in certain fixed periods. Is there not here magnificent design ? A mighty effect ? Where is the designer ? What is the cause ? Who constituted the sun the great attracting centre, and at the same time gave bounds to those planets, in their approaches to the sun ? Not one of these questions can be *rationally* answered, without admitting the existence of an infinitely wise and powerful God, who spake

and it was done ; who commanded and it stood fast. Moreover, the solar system is itself but a small part in a great whole ; so small that, were it struck out of existence, its loss might never be noticed by the other parts of the wide-spreading universe. It is not imagination, but true science, that teaches the existence of myriads of individual worlds, and of numberless systems of worlds.

*Proof from the Universe.*

The universe exists, and there must be some cause of its existence. This cause must be in itself or out of itself ; and that it has not existed eternally, is evident from at least two facts. First, it is a system fitted up ; and secondly, there have been discovered in it the elements of its own destruction. There is a resisting medium, in which, at least, all the planets move, and which must effectually, in the course of time, change their regular motions, if it be not counteracted, and no counteracting force has been found to exist of a similar nature ; and none at all, if we deny the existence of that omnipotent Agency which *reason* beholds enthroned above all material existences.

Did the universe create itself? The supposition is absurd ; for the implication is, that it existed and acted before it existed. But if it now exist, and has not always existed, and did not bring itself into existence, it must have originated in an efficiency out of itself, and *that*, by whatever name called, must be intelligent and infinite. We call it God ; and we can no more doubt his existence than we can doubt the existence of the objects which we behold. We must cease to exercise reason, before we can doubt the existence of such a Being. It is contrary to all the sane operations of a rational mind, to deny the existence of an all-wise and all-powerful God. He who does deny it, contradicts the teachings of his



own common sense, and wars with the principles of action which govern him in his daily transactions in the affairs of time.

*New proofs constantly elicited by Science.*

It may be here observed, that the developments of science are continually exhibiting, more and more, the evidences of this great central truth, — *There is a God*. Admitting the asserted facts of Geology to be real facts; *that* science has brought out new proofs of design in the formation and structure of the earth. Not less than three or four new creations and extinctions of animals and vegetables have taken place on the surface of our globe, for the express purpose of progressively preparing it for its present occupants. That there was, in the nature of things, a necessity for such a series of changes, we do not believe; but the fact that there has been such a series, is plain evidence of design. It shows, conclusively, that some intelligent agent had been concerned in these changes, and that, by whatever title designated, he must have been an infinite Being, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

*Proof Everywhere.*

Wherever we direct our attention, to whatever object our thoughts turn; whether we contemplate ourselves materially or mentally, or take a survey of the inferior order of beings, or of the inanimate creation; the earth — its structure, motions, and adaptations — its parts, and its whole as composed of parts; or look to other portions of the solar system, we are forced to the conclusion that there must be a supreme Being, the creator, upholder, and governor of all things. If we doubt, it is not for the want of evidence.

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

*Finite Creatures can know nothing, a priori, respecting the Infinite Creator.*

THE great Architect of the universe must reveal himself, or his attributes will remain concealed. "Canst thou, by searching, find out God?" There are, however, points, in regard to which we may reason without presumption, and come to conclusions in all probability correct.

We may affirm of the Being, who is by us designated God, that either he has had or has not had a beginning. If he had a beginning, then there was a period when he did not exist; and there must have been a cause for the commencement of his existence; and this cause must have been either in himself or out of himself. But it could not have been in himself, for that would be supposing him to exist before he existed. It could not have been out of himself, for that would be making him subject to another being, and himself a mere creature; of course not the supreme God. Hence, he must be self-existent, not deriving existence from any external source whatever. In other words, to exist is a part of his nature—he cannot but exist—and must have existed from eternity, and will eternally continue to exist. That which does exist, and of which no reason can be assigned for its existence, except that its nature is to exist, and whose existence cannot be destroyed or limited by any agency whatever, must exist for ever. That there can be no power to terminate the existence of God is obvious, from the fact that he is infinitely above all



power but his own. We cannot intimate that he may desire to terminate his own existence, without implying imperfection in him ; but how can he be otherwise than perfect, if he be Supreme.

To ascertain what are the attributes of this Being, besides self-existence and eternity, we must examine his works.— Whatever he has done, he has possessed sufficient power to do. The power which can cause something to exist where nothing had previously existed, must be so great that we can set no limits to it. Hence, it is appropriately termed *infinite*. The creator of all things is likewise their upholder, and for *this* infinite power is also requisite. He that made all things, and upholds all things, must be acquainted with all things,—in other words, is *omniscient*. Suppose him not omniscient, and you make him imperfect ; and if he be not perfect, in every respect, he is not truly the Supreme. God is *omnipresent*, for he constantly sustains and governs all things. Wherever his upholding and regulating power is, there he is. Established laws are but uniform modes of his operations. His laws pervade the universe ; therefore, he pervades it, being *in* all, yet, in nature, *distinct* from all. Pantheism is as untrue as is Atheism.

The works of God declare him infinitely *wise*. But is he a benevolent or a malevolent Being ? \* We think it obvious that the original design of his operations, so far as they are discoverable, appears to be good and not evil ; it is nature

---

\* “What is true of an *infinite* Being, must be true of him to an *infinite* extent. Then, if God be possessed of *any* goodness, he is possessed of *infinite* goodness. An evil or malignant being must, from the nature of the passion, be unhappy ; and an *infinite* Being, if he be evil, must be *infinitely* unhappy. But God must be *happy*, as seen from the nature of his other attributes ; having infinite power, and wisdom, and knowledge, he *can* be happy, and, of course, *will* be ; and, if happy at all, *infinitely* so ; hence, not evil at all, but *infinitely* good, because happiness and goodness are inseparable.” — *Emerson's Lectures on Infidelity*, 2d ed., p. 19.

abused and perverted, that occasions pain, and not the original tendency. The proofs of benevolence are to those of malevolence as a thousand to one. Moreover, we can account for all indications of the latter, without ascribing an evil nature to God; but, in respect to the former, we cannot satisfy ourselves, unless we attribute to him a benevolent nature. His goodness may be seen everywhere; for the veriest tokens of wrath toward erring man, are not destitute of intimations that he afflicts not willingly. The tornado, laying waste the habitations and destroying the lives of men, is made to subserve purposes of kindness. The more carefully we investigate the products of the infinite mind, the more do we discover indications of divine goodness.

The preceding may be designated deductions of reason. Systematic theology contemplates the attributes of God in the light of the Scriptures, conjoined with that which shines from the manifestations of himself in his works. It defines them to be, "the several qualities or perfections of his nature."

#### *Classification of these Attributes.*

They are divided into two classes, *natural* and *moral*. Self-existence, eternity, immutability, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, independence, and self-sufficiency, belong to the first class. Benevolence, wisdom, holiness, justice, veracity, and mercy, including grace, to the second. These last named, however, are as natural as the former, but, as they prove to us that God has a moral character, they therefore are placed in a separate class. Moral qualities are not predicable of the natural attributes. Omnipotence determines nothing respecting the benevolence or malevolence of him possessing it. — No emotion of love, or of hatred, is excited by the bare contemplation of omniscience or omnipresence. But we cannot meditate upon a moral attribute, without being conscious of

approving or disapproving — of having delight in it, or the reverse. The origin of this classification given to the divine attributes is simple, and may be illustrated by reference to intellectual philosophy. By analyzing the mind's operations, we find it capable of acting in a variety of ways, and therefore we conclude it has the attributes which enable it thus to act. It being found that the mind remembers, the attribute of memory is assigned to it. Does the mind reason, then it is said to possess such a power. We perceive that God has accomplished many things requiring power greater than we can comprehend — it is absolutely beyond our conceptions ; hence our decision is, that he is omnipotent, and we class *omnipotence* as one of his attributes. So far as man can perceive, the works of the supreme Being exhibit marks of the highest skill, forethought, and adaptation of parts to a whole. Wherefore, we affirm, God is wise, and rank *wisdom* among his attributes. After the same manner, all the other attributes are discovered and placed in the catalogue. The method pursued is simple and natural. Can it be otherwise than satisfactory ? From this general view, I proceed to notice particular attributes ; and, in so doing, I shall assume, for the present, the infallibility of the Scriptures.

#### THE ONENESS OF GOD.

The idea implied in this word *oneness*, as used in relation to the supreme Being, is more commonly designated by the term *unity*, which philosophers have defined to be, *what is, in itself, indivisible, but divided from every thing else*. It may be questioned, however, whether the word admits of a definition, any more than do the terms red, white, black. Unity, when employed descriptively in reference to God, means that he is one, in number, essence, and attributes. It is applied in a similar manner to man ; we say of him, he is *one* ; that is,

not many. Moreover, we affirm of a tree that it is one ; a city, also, is one ; and so is a state, a nation, a kingdom, and a world.

The unity of an object determines nothing as to its nature in other respects. Man, though one, is constituted of matter and mind ; his mental part is one, yet it has a number of faculties. An army is one ; still, there are in it divisions and sub-divisions. Each division is formed by congregated individuals, and each individual has a body and a soul, with various powers and capabilities. The affirmation, that God is one, declares his unity, in distinction from a plurality of Gods ; there is one God, and but one.

*What is the testimony of Reason, touching the Divine Unity?*

This faculty discovers a oneness of *design*, in all the works of Nature ; but oneness of *agency* does not necessarily follow from oneness of design. The entire mechanism of a watch exhibits unity of design, while a hundred persons may have been employed in its production. Still, here it is evident that one mind had the superintendency of all the others engaged on the several parts. Nature affords no hint that there is more than one God ; and could we see with the clearness of Omniscience, we should doubtless perceive it to have been impossible that more than one was active in creating and arranging the universe.

It has been thought by some, that the existence of the opposites, good and evil, indicates the agency of opposing Deities. But why should their existence be regarded as such proof ? Are there not antagonist forces operating in many parts of Nature ? The centrifugal and the centripetal agencies, by the influence of which the planets describe curvilinear orbits about the sun, are certainly far from acting in the same direction, though they conspire to a beautiful result. No one is

embarrassed by the existence of good, and it is much easier to account for the introduction of evil on the supposition of one God, than of two or more. Both are evidently tending, to a grand end, the glory of the one Jehovah; goodness, of its own accord, and evil, by an overruling providence. Were there more than one God, it is not probable that the latter could be turned to such account.

Let us suppose the existence of two Deities. Now, it is evident, they must be alike or not alike. If perfectly alike, then it would be difficult to show wherein they are two; their thoughts are the same, so are their acts. Take the position that they are unlike. One, therefore, must be superior to the other; for the happiest description that can be given of God is the following: "He is the most perfect Being." If one be of this character, the other is of course imperfect; and, consequently, does not answer to the idea we have of God.—Should the two be exactly opposed, each to the other, in all respects, and of equal ability, then precisely counteracted would be all their attempts to do any thing. Omnipotence opposed to omnipotence, can accomplish nothing. Something has been accomplished, therefore two such beings cannot have existed. The deductions of reason could be no more satisfactory, were we to proceed on the assumption of more than two Deities.

We think it to be clear, that the idea of perfection is associated with a distinct apprehension of an almighty and infinite Lord. "In every science, reason searches for some one fundamental principle; she requires one first cause, one ideal of perfection, one supreme lawgiver; and wherever reason has to content herself with plurality, as the ultimate and absolute in any thing, she feels that she has not attained a resting-place; her innate demands are not satisfied."



*The Bible View of this Attribute.*

Polytheism has prevailed extensively in the earth; the imaginary divinities of men have been almost as numerous as the sands of the sea-shore. A primary object with the Scriptures is, to set the world right in respect to the point. "Every attentive student of the Bible will perceive, that to preserve or recover man from idolatry, by instructing him in the character and perfections of the one living and true God, and the way in which he should be worshipped and served, was, in some respects, the principal end for which revelation was vouchsafed." Hence, the testimony of the one Jehovah, respecting his own unity, might naturally be expected to be both explicit and full. Such is the fact. He has given line upon line, in regard to it. I shall proceed to select passages, taking them in their biblical order:

"The Lord he is God, there is none else besides him." Deut. 4: 35. "The Lord our God is one Lord." 6: 4. "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me." 32: 39. "There is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee." 2 Sam. 7: 22. "Thou art the God, even thou alone." 2 Kings, 19: 15. "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone." Neh. 9: 6. "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." Isa. 44: 6. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me." Isa. 45: 5. "That they might know thee, the only true God." John, 17: 3. "To us there is but one God." 1 Cor. 8: 6. "God is one." Gal. 3: 20. "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever." 1 Tim. 1: 17. "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well." James, 2: 19.



These declarations are such as we might reasonably expect to find. Nor can their direct bearing be difficult of discovery. The claims of God, the infinite and true, are asserted in opposition to idols. By them is refuted the heathen notion of many divinities. They are not mere exclamations, but inspired *dicta*.

Abraham was called out from Ur of Chaldea, for the purpose of establishing a pure worship of the great I AM. His ancestors had dwelt amidst idolatry; perhaps they were themselves guilty of it. Israel was an elect nation; for this, as well as other reasons, that, among them, the correct idea respecting God might be cherished. Surrounded by polytheists, they were constantly in danger of being drawn astray; hence the frequent warnings they received.

The texts which teach the oneness of God, do, in the judgment of some, preclude every shadow of claim on the part of Christ to an equality with the Father. But the Lord Jesus was not an idol; therefore the passages, which speak only against idolatry, do not deny his divinity. The sacred volume is its own interpreter. If in one part, or in many, yea, in all parts, it unequivocally asserts the oneness of God, and is alike definite and comprehensive in its testimony to a trinity of persons in the divine Being, both doctrines must be true; and if true, they are neither contradictory nor inconsistent.

Are we assured that trinity in unity is an impossibility? Surely it is not, provided it exists; for the fact of its existence proves it a possibility. Shall we be told, that reason utterly rejects the sentiment as absurd? Our reply would be couched in the form of an interrogation, *whose reason?* Not that of the greatest Being in the universe, if he has revealed it as an eternal truth; let it appear that the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the Godhead can be deduced from the teachings of the Most High to man, then shall we know that

it accords fully with the reason of the uncreated God, and of all created intelligences.

Is the doctrine of the Trinity contrary to reason? The question is not, whether it implies more than the largest powers of any human or angelic mind can comprehend. Perhaps we fully apprehend nothing pertaining to the God-head. Are we not profoundly ignorant even of ourselves? Who understands perfectly the properties of any portion of matter, however minute? No living being on earth, is able to show how with the eye man sees, or by means of the ear he hears. Philosophy goes but a little distance in examining or explaining any subject. Our simplest motions and emotions are, to us, as certainly incomprehensible as are the deepest things in theology. On what subject are we not profoundly ignorant?

The doctrine of the Trinity is, we admit, above reason, except as revelation brings it down to us. Being above reason, it cannot be shown to be contrary to reason, for what is above reason cannot be reasoned about. But whatever God has revealed, it was proper that he should make known to us in just the way and to the extent that he has done. Man is not duly acquainted with his own moral necessities, till informed by Him who knows all things. Creatures, naturally, are wholly ignorant of the nature of the supreme Being; nor can they be otherwise, till he develops himself. Whether there be three persons, or a less number, or a greater, in the God-head, is a point in respect to which no human being has the least means to form a definite opinion, otherwise than as the Almighty himself has furnished them. Pompous declarations, by narrow-sighted, self-conceited worms, are far more indicative of contracted than of enlarged views. In no manner is the stupidity and folly of man more openly displayed, than when he declaims against the doctrine of the Trinity. We hang our heads in shame, on account of those who *boastingly*

exhibit their ignorance on this subject. Those only conform to right reason, who meekly and thankfully receive the word of the Lord. The proud are left to confusion; yea, strong delusions are even sent upon them, as a righteous retribution from an insulted God.

## THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD.

No term employed in connection with delineations of the Divine nature and character is more the occasion of cavil, than is that of *sovereignty*. Many misapprehend its import. Jehovah is not a tyrant; delighting in a mere display of arbitrary power. He never acts without the best of reasons. "True and righteous are his judgments." Nor is he ever unkind, "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God."

By the sovereignty of the supreme Being, we are to understand that in all his thoughts, purposes, and acts, he is guided by his own independent *pleasure* — creatures are not in any case consulted in the Divine deliberations. The work of creation as a whole; the number of worlds of which each system should be formed; what should be the dimensions of the central suns; how many planets should be assigned to each sun; their quantity of matter, their figures, and their velocity, both in their diurnal and annual revolutions, were decided by his unbiassed will.

The existence and endowment of all living beings, were determined by him alone; and they subsist in as many orders as he saw fit to appoint; also their capabilities are as he designed them. It was in his power to give life or to refrain from so doing. He was before all things. Our globe is entirely a product of his sovereignty. "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." The same is true of human beings. Only two persons were originally made, instead of a greater number, because God so counselled. The

population of the earth ; the location of the different nations, their natural advantages, were purposed by him, independently of their choice.

The means of grace are given or withheld by him. To one nation he sends the gospel ; another is left in the darkness of heathenism. The descendants of Jacob were selected for a peculiar people ; while the rest of the world seemed, for ages, to have been delivered up to superstition. One community he blesses with a revival, and permits another to lie as a desolate field, while a third is cursed by a delusion. Here a single family is visited with saving mercy ; and every one besides, in the place, remains unaffected. From a large household only a few are made the recipients of grace, while all enjoy the same means of becoming holy. The commencement of life and its long continuance, or abrupt termination, are wholly as the Almighty determines. " We cannot conceive how God could have made more or greater distinctions among men, in this life, than he has made ; or how he could have made greater or more visible displays of his sovereignty in governing one and the same large family." It has been well affirmed in regard to this doctrine, that to assert it " would seem to be the part of the consistent philosophical theologian ; to deny it, the business of a timorous moderation, of a time-serving policy, or of the native pride and self-sufficiency of man."

Sovereignty is not an assumption, on the part of God, but an attribute of his nature. Infinitely superior to all creatures, he necessarily acts independently of them ; and could not cease to be a sovereign, were the desire to enter his mind.

The Scriptures are free and ample in respect to the point now contemplated. We meet it in the first chapter of the volume, yea, in the opening verse ; for we are there informed, that, by a mere act of sovereignty, God summoned into existence the material universe. We find the fact expressed in

the following terms: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Ps. 33: 6. Each specification, recorded in the first chapter of the Bible, teaches and illustrates the doctrine.—The Most High spake, and the chaotic materials assumed various forms of order and beauty. He gave the command: "Let there be light, and there was light." The waters divide; the dry land appears; the diversified productions of the sea, the soil, and the air, all come into being at his simple bidding. One fiat suffices; nothing hesitates. Man stands up in full maturity of body and of mind. Then issues the law of paradise, without the consent of him for whom it is framed. When it was violated, the penalty was peremptorily executed, without the permission of the offender.

Absolute sovereignty is demonstrated in the history of the world's destruction by the flood. The guilty inhabitants were warned, but not consulted. The fountains of the great deep, and the windows of heaven, heard the voice of Jehovah, and yielded at once to the call, not heeding in the least the agonies of dying millions. The fire that consumed Sodom, and the adjacent cities, fell at the mandate of sovereignty, devouring men, women, and children, as if they were stubble. Pharaoh, to whom Moses and Aaron were sent, affords a conspicuous example, illustrative of the doctrine. The ten plagues, the heart hardened, and the overthrow in the Red Sea, utter a uniform sentiment: "And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power; and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9: 16. The various dealings of God with many individuals and nations, clearly evince the fact of his sovereignty. It is enough barely to refer the reader to the Canaanites, the Midianites, the Assyrians, and Chaldeans. We may gaze upon the ruins of numerous cities, whose walls have been demolished by the will of Jehovah. "Be still and know that I am



God ; I will be exalted among the heathen ; I will be exalted in the earth."

In the afflictions which befall man, the supreme Being is declared to be a sovereign. "For he maketh sore and bindeth up ; he woundeth, and his hands make whole." "I kill, and I make alive ; I wound and I heal, neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." The Scriptures assert, unequivocally, that human life is limited by God. "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee ; thou hast appointed his bounds, that he cannot pass." Job, 14 : 5.

Such passages as the ensuing, are explicit. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." Ps. 119 : 89. "There are many devices in a man's heart ; nevertheless the counsel of the Lord that shall stand." Prov. 19 : 21. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass ; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Isa. 14 : 24. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou ?" Dan. 4 : 35.

The Saviour, in the parable of the laborers, inculcates the doctrine of Divine sovereignty, in respect to the bestowment of favors. "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own ? Is thine eye evil, because I am good ? So the last shall be first, and the first last, for many be called but few chosen." Matt. 20 : 15, 16. By inspiration, we are taught that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Rom. 9 : 16. In strict harmony with these particular texts, is the general tenor of the Bible ; and the teachings of that book are corroborated by daily occurrences in the realm of nature ; also in the operations of providence. To this man are given five talents ; to another two, and to another one. An idiot may be the nearest neigh-



bor of him whose intellect is surpassingly brilliant. Some live when all the energies of death are hold of them ; and many drop away without any apparent disease. Now, the atmosphere is converted into the deadly sirocco ; then made bland as the breath of heaven ; and always is according to the pleasure of God. He sends rain and forms a flood, or parches the earth till it becomes powder and dust. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out !"

That attribute of the Deity, here briefly contemplated, cannot fail to gladden the heart of the enlightened Christian. It allows to God the sole occupancy of the seat of empire ; and every child of his must desire that he should have it. The Judge of all cannot err. Clouds and darkness may be round about him, but righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. "I rejoice in his sovereignty," said a dying lady. To the independent Jehovah she cheerfully committed her husband and children. Whenever this doctrine is opposed, we infer there is misapprehension or unregeneracy. Wicked men cannot be pleased with it ; but their resistance avails nothing, except to array the anger of the Lord against themselves. Utterly impotent are all efforts to subvert the purposes of the Almighty ; for with infinite ease he can defeat every design of man, securing praise from maliciousness. — The sinner, under the strivings of the Spirit, is soon convinced that his eternal destiny depends on the changeless determination of God ; and, till his heart is truly humble, he will hate what he cannot help. Often do the impenitent gnash their teeth in view of the Lord's sovereignty.

This doctrine should be fully and frequently presented from the pulpit ; though he, discharging duty in this respect, will doubtless incur odium. It is humbling to human pride. We shall inevitably think more highly of ourselves than we ought, if the doctrine be disbelieved. Correct feeling ascribes all

goodness in the creature to unmerited mercy. "By the grace of God I am what I am."

It may properly be observed, that the Divine sovereignty does not in the least conflict with the free moral agency of man. Truths never clash. Facts cannot interfere one with another. Jehovah is a sovereign; man is free and accountable. O let all tremblingly remember, that, for the stubborn rejecters of the doctrine of the Divine sovereignty, the judgment day will exhibit terrors from which no covering can shield them. Vials of ceaseless wrath will be poured on their unprotected heads.

#### THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD.

##### *The Term Defined.*

By immutability, as applied to the supreme Being, is meant, that his nature, the mode of his existence, and his purposes, never change. In these respects he ever has been and always will be the same. Furthermore, the term imports that "God has, at one time, the same feelings or affections towards any being or event, which he would have at any other time towards that being or event, existing in all other respects the same." Variety in his manner of treating a person, or a nation, is not excluded. A settled purpose to deal with a moral agent according to his deserts, might demand frequent alterations in the divine regimen. He that is inflated with pride, must be disciplined in a different manner when in the condition supposed, from what is suited to him when filled with self-loathing. How prospered of the Lord was Israel once; and what judgments have long been falling upon that people. Why this change on the part of the Almighty? Because of a corresponding one in that nation. God's immutable love of righteousness, and hatred of sin, necessitated him to the course pursued.

*Scripture Testimony.*

“God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent.” Num. 23 : 19. This passage was extorted by the agency of the Most High from the lips of Balaam. Its value consists not in the fact that he said it, but in the circumstances in which it was uttered. The false prophet was compelled to declare the truth; instead of cursing, he was forced to bless. “And also the strength of Israel will not lie nor repent.” 1 Sam. 15 : 29. The occasion which drew out this testimony, renders it very forcible. “Thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end.” Ps. 102 : 27. Contrasting the changeableness of the earth and visible heavens, with the eternity and immutability of God, the Psalmist concludes in the words just quoted. Preceding this passage is the following pointed statement: “The counsel of the Lord standeth forever; the thoughts of his heart to all generations.” Ps. 33 : 11. We read in Proverbs, 19 : 21, that, “there are many devices in a man’s heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.” Jehovah speaks of himself by Isaiah, 46 : 10, thus: “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”—Strong is the announcement by the prophet Malachi: “For I am the Lord, I change not.” 3 : 6. The apostle tells us, Rom. 11 : 29, that, “the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” i. e. Jehovah never changes his purpose. What he absolutely promised to the Hebrew patriarchs he will not fail to perform, however perverse may be the posterity of those ancient saints. It was according to an eternal plan, “purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord,” that the apostles preached the gospel. Eph. 3 : 11. Salvation is made the possession of individuals, by a predestination of him “who

worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," as we learn from the same epistle. James speaks of the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning." 1 : 17. The foregoing are a mere sample of what the Scriptures teach on this subject.

*This Attribute enters into our Ideas of God.*

Immutability is associated, in our minds, with that infinite and perfect Being, by us termed GOD. We mean, when speaking of him, not a created, fallible existence. What is the Lord if he be not absolutely perfect. Now, mutability implies imperfection. If Jehovah may change, then he is capable of becoming a better God than he now is, or of ceasing to be as excellent as he is at present. In either case, the fact of mutability being established, the fact of imperfection is likewise made certain. Prove that God is changeable, and you prove him an imperfect Being ; you prove that there is no supreme ruler in the universe. These suggestions are not used as arguments, by which to establish the immutability of God ; yet it is well for us to know where assumptions, that seem to be harmless, may possibly carry us.

Again : If there be a God, he is infinitely superior to all agencies and influences. No power, exterior to himself, can be imagined, which could, in any way, cause him to vary from his eternal unchangeableness ; and there can be no possible agency which would induce him to make a voluntary change in the mode of his existence, or in the purposes of his heart. Whatever possesses the attributes of a motive, derives its existence from God, and is equally present to his mind at all periods of his eternity. Jehovah is immutably omniscient, and immutably omnipresent.

*An Objection Considered.*

Are there not, however, in the Scriptures, statements, which seem to set aside the evidence already gathered from the inspired pages? I refer to such as the following: "And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart." Gen. 6: 6. "And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." Ex. 32: 14. "Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, saying, it repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king." 1 Sam. 15: 10, 11. "For the Lord will judge his people, and he will repent himself concerning his servants." Ps. 135: 14. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." Jonah, 3: 10. With these and similar texts, many facts in the Divine administration apparently coincide. Does now the sacred volume contradict itself? Are some facts in the government of God set aside by others, which are directly their opposites? These are questions which no enlightened christian will desire to see buried or evaded. If the Bible do unqualifiedly falsify its own assertions, then is it of no authority; being untrue here, it may be there and everywhere.

Now, the doctrine of the immutability of God is most explicitly taught in the Scriptures; the fact is undeniable; its obviousness precludes doubt. We are then brought to a single inquiry, How may those passages, which say the Lord repented in certain instances, be reconciled with this doctrine? It will be readily admitted that the Most High has a perfect right to use any forms of speech concerning himself, which he may judge useful to his creatures. He has, moreover, deemed it needful to employ a great variety of figures, when communicating with the human family. The sacred penman, by his



authority, style him a *rock*, and this figure possesses great force, with those who know how rocks were serviceable in the country where the Bible was written. Such a metaphor would not have received the Divine sanction, if any rational being were to be necessarily injured by it. True, some may stumble where nought but a feather impedes the passage; but the difficulty lies not in the obstruction.

Let us now draw near to these, as some think, troublesome representations, that we may perceive their consistency or inconsistency with the doctrine of the Divine immutability. It is obvious, that they were not uttered for the purpose of opposing this doctrine. Also it is plain that the inspired writers did not suppose themselves to be conflicting in one statement with what they advance elsewhere. Indeed, in some passages, Jehovah appears asserting the repentance named, of himself; while, in various other places, he proclaims his own changeless nature and designs. Does not the Lord sometimes do what would indicate an alteration of purpose, provided the same acts were performed by man? Were an individual to erect a goodly edifice, and should he, soon after its completion, deliberately begin to take it down, all beholding might naturally conclude that he repented of building it. So, when the Almighty destroys his own work, which seems made to stand, then does he appear to have repented. Whenever there is this outward exhibition, this appearance of repentance, speaking after the manner of men, it may be said that he repented. Such is a true explanation of some of the passages constituting the class before us. Others are clearly instances in which positive threatenings were uttered with an implied but not expressed condition. "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." What language could be more bold and unqualified? Still, the inhabitants of the designated city supposed the sentence conditional, for they immediately attempted to avert it; nor were they unsuccessful. Humbling



themselves before the Lord, he did not destroy them ; and, by a figure of speech, it is affirmed that he repented. Expressions of this description are merely an accommodation to human weakness. Much of the scriptural phraseology, with reference to the Holy One, is metaphorical. Who is misled by it ? Surely, not the meek inquirer after truth. No humble child of God stumbles upon a scriptural metaphor. Cavillers are not desirous that difficulties, real or imaginary, should be obviated. To be dissatisfied with the Bible is their joy ; and it is probable that many of them will persist in their course of opposition till death and hell engulf them.

God never does what he had not from eternity purposed. It was as certain, millions of years before the world was created, that the flood would overwhelm the human race, one family alone excepted, as it was when the fountains of the great deep were actually broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. The supposition that the all-wise Jehovah alters his purpose, is not simply a harmless mistake, it is a baneful error. Far, *far* from mortals be the thought, that events in time can change eternal counsels ; that the moral revolutions among men may revolutionize the government of Jehovah. We should as wisely conclude that the great orb of light, when by reason of clouds we see it not, has been converted into an object altogether unlike this luminary, because it is not the same to us, as to infer a change in the purpose of God, because the course of his providence has undergone a change. The veiling of the sun from our view, we know cannot affect at all its power of diffusing light. We ought to consider, that the varying acts of the Almighty may result as naturally from an unvarying purpose as from several purposes ; and that, in fact, there can be with him only immutable purposes.

*This Attribute a Source of Joy.*

God's unchangeableness is an attribute in which every intelligent creature ought to rejoice. By it the Divine perfections are held in perpetual harmony. The supreme Being is infinitely wise, powerful, and good; thus he will continue to be forever. There is, therefore, no possibility of confusion, or conflict, among those attributes.

Nature's laws are but uniform modes in which the Ruler of the universe exhibits himself among his works. The steadiness by which the earth pursues its course, in the annual circuit marked out to it, and in its diurnal revolutions, results from this attribute of Jehovah. Seed-time and harvest, summer and winter, obey its order. Destroy the immutability of God, and every thing beneath the sun might be instantly reversed; the mountains moving, the trees migrating, and all the streams of water retreating to their sources; in less than a day the entire globe might exhibit a chaos as unseemly as that which characterized it ere the first of the six day's work was performed.

Still more essential, if possible, is this attribute to God, as the moral governor of rational beings. It secures a permanency of principles in his administration. Having once ascertained his will, the subjects of his rule are not necessitated to search for it a second time; it abides with unvarying exactness. What secures the Divine approbation to-day, will do it to-morrow, and onwards. But were God mutable, he might at one time disapprove what at others he actually requires; might this year punish us for doing the very service which twelve months since he absolutely demanded. Annihilation would be preferable to existence under the fickle regimen of an ever-changing God. Who would not desire rather an immutable nothingness.

Here is a source of unspeakable joy to the christian. The holiness of his Lord is everlasting; heaven's bliss admits of no decrease; its blessed scenes of purity are not only perfect but perpetual. Their lustre cannot be tarnished; the celestial city can have no fear of being unparadised.

Jehovah's promises are all made sure by his immutability. The feelings of his heart, and the counsels of his will, continue unaltered. Nothing occurs, in the condition of things, which was not foreseen and predetermined. "He is in one mind and who can turn him? And what his soul desireth even that he doeth." How munificent are the favors hung out in predictions to the Church, and fail they cannot; in the time appointed, which is the best possible, they shall be accomplished. Means, too, ordained by the Lord, when faithfully employed, are sure of his benediction; his immutability ensures their success. God's throne shall sooner crumble beneath him, than one of his promises to his people become null. On the Divine immutability the believer may firmly and joyfully rest.

"Let mountains from their seats be hurled,  
Down to the deep and buried there;  
Convulsions shake the solid world,  
Our faith shall never yield to fear."

*A fearful Attribute for the Wicked.*

To the unrepenting sinner, this attribute betokens nothing but terror; for God is immutably holy, and consequently unchangeably arrayed against impenitence. Threatenings will be executed; vengeance sleeps not, and will be poured out according to the Lord's determination. Endless suffering in hell is as sure to be the lot of those rejecting Christ, as if each were now feeling the gnawings of the undying worm, and the devouring flames of the unquenchable fire. By the immuta-

bility of God, the terms of life everlasting continue the same till the end of time, and the doom of such as reject them is settled for eternity.

Rebels against Jehovah would do well to consider with whom they are at war. It is not merely wisdom, power, and holiness, each possessed in perfection, that they have daily challenged by their wickedness, but it is these and all the attributes of the Most High in their unchangeableness. An endless warfare the sinner has begun — O, madness most insane ! Hide thee in the dust, thou impotent being ! Go, with the reptiles, into the secret openings of the earth. — Blush to be called a human being. Thou, at war with immutable holiness defended by Omnipotence ! Couldst thou but once see thyself, thine own eyes would loathe thee, and thine own lips hiss thee. Ye contemptible opposers of goodness, in vain shall your cry be heard, saying to the mountains, “Cover us ; and to the hills, fall on us.” These obey the laws of the Divine immutability, and now abhor you.

I vary, for a moment, the style of my address to the opposers of God's unchangeable requirements. Stand up in all the dignity of your assumed importance ; walk forth amid creation's wonders ; exercise the authority supposed by yourselves to be within you ; bid the rivers stop in their channels ; order the lightnings to be quiet, and the thunders to utter their voices no more ; chain the earth in its orbit, and send back every beam that issues from the sun ; scale the heavens ; visit all the planets, and weigh the fixed stars, those luminaries of other systems ; do what I have named, and infinitely more, but never think to affect the immutability of God !

## THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

Omniscience, as the composition of the term indicates, designates perfect knowledge. The Lord knows all things. He has not only the most comprehensive understanding of them, but is acquainted with them in all their minuteness. Animalcules, millions of which may occupy together a single drop of water, are as fully the subjects of his knowledge, as are men and angels. He created matter, and endowed it with various attributes; wherefore, its properties and relations cannot be unknown to him. With him originated, also, the mental world, with all its endowments; hence, to him, none of its departments or operations can be unknown. The moral world, too, sprang into being at his word. All things are constantly upheld by him. Moreover, he is perfectly acquainted with his own infinite nature. The knowledge of the Lord neither increases nor diminishes; because eternally he knew all things that ever could be known. It is impossible that any new ideas should arise in his mind.

This infinitude of the Divine knowledge, is set forth in diversified phraseology in the Scriptures. In Job, 26: 6, "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering." In Psalm, 147: 5, it is said, "His understanding is infinite." In Hebrews, 4: 13, we read, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." In 1 John, 3: 20, we find the following, "God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." We might make an appeal to the predictions of future events, and point to their fulfilment as a proof of God's omniscience. A being not infinite in knowledge, is incapable of asserting infallibly the occurrence of any future event. The whole course of divine



Providence is a clear comment upon the sentiment we are considering ; and each new leaf turned in this great Book of the Lord illustrates it.

#### THE OMNIPRESENCE OF GOD.

In affirming that God is omnipresent, we mean that he is everywhere at one and the same time. He is here, in heaven, and in all parts of his vast universe perpetually ; present with Gabriel, and present with us ; he listens to the notes of the highest seraph, and at the same time to the cry of the meanest of his creatures ; is with the king on his throne, and with the prisoner in his dungeon. God is everywhere present, as the upholder, governor, and arbiter of all things. To us, limited to a single position, the idea of ubiquity is surely incomprehensible ; yet, we seem to be mentally where we are not bodily. Jehovah is an infinite mind. On this attribute of the Deity, both ancients and moderns have speculated extensively. But here, as elsewhere, theories are futile, and one great revealed fact should satisfy us. Why speak of God as being infinite space, or as substance, diffused through the universe ? Plato called him the soul of the world. He is, indeed, such in a sense, but not according to any pantheistic representation. The Scriptures, accommodating themselves to the limited nature of man's faculties, describe the omnipresence of God by figures, like the following : "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro, throughout the whole earth." 2 Chron. 16 : 9. "His eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings." Job, 34 : 21. "The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." Prov. 5 : 21. Jehovah thus speaks of himself : "Mine eyes are upon all their ways. They are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes." Jer. 16 : 17. Again, "Am I a



God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him, saith the Lord? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" Jer. 23: 23, 24. The omniscience and omnipresence of God are inseparably connected, and are necessary to the perfection of the Divine nature. Without them, he could not be an impartial Judge. Suppose the Almighty to know every thing, except what has transpired in this world, for the last fifteen minutes; that ignorance, alone, might embarrass him in all his administration. He must be absolutely acquainted with every event and emotion, or not be truly an infinite Lord. Limit his knowledge in the least, and you destroy his perfection. If God know all things, then there is no escape from his scrutiny. The same inference follows, if he be present in every place continually. For he is not present as an unconscious Being, but as omniscient.

*A Mistake Corrected.*

It is well known that the atheist, the theist, and the pantheist, have long claimed the material world as peculiarly their own. The first, adopting as his creed, *no* God; the second, *a* God; and third, *all* God; each has sought and found proof in nature, as he supposes, that his favorite creed is the true one. Theoretically they differ, but practically they harmonize; for all of them, *acting* upon the belief of the first, recognize an intelligent God nowhere.

Believers in the infallibility of the Bible, adopt, as an article of their creed, *God everywhere*. The language is concise, the import vast; but when they give their *comment*, not seldom appears a palpable inconsistency. To the rejecters of the inspired word, they have shown themselves quite too ready to yield, not only the material world, but the intellectual also. Forgetting the song of the morning stars, and

the shout of the angels, when the earth arose into its present form, at the bidding of Jehovah, they seem to remember only the curse pronounced upon it, and transmit that curse from age to age. Because sin has disordered the moral world, and God's image there has been effaced, the unwarrantable conclusion seems to be drawn, that intellect has lost its connection with the infinite Mind, and must necessarily be considered *an enemy to all righteousness*. I confess an unwillingness to admit, in any degree, the infidel's claim. Adopting, as my own belief, *God everywhere*, I would recognize his agency no less in the world of matter than in that of mind, and in both as actually as in the moral.

Whatever is beautiful and sublime in nature, polished in art, mysterious in science, and wonderful in intellect, I would view as the result of his direct or indirect agency. The painted canvass, the chiselled marble, the brazen statue, the curious mechanism, the costly edifice, and the magnificent temple, bespeak the presence of mind; and mind always points upwards. Even the tower, erected on the plains of Shinar, should elevate our thoughts to the Deity, for it brought him down to earth. Egypt's towering pyramids may yet be seen to be not more the monuments of man's folly than of God's wisdom. The former may have been influenced by vanity, in planning and executing; not so the latter, in permitting and superintending. Ancient hieroglyphics, like the mystic characters on the wall of Belshazzar's palace, were written by the fingers of a man's hand. As the former, when interpreted, revealed momentous truths, so *may* the latter bring to light many facts confirmative of the Bible. Those great achievements of intellect, which adorn the history of other ages, were not the offspring of chance. Future developments will doubtless show, that important parts have been acted in the economy of God, by those whose talents we have admired, but whom we have, perhaps, regarded as belonging to another order of beings; a

race, seemingly, unknown even to the Deity. We should not deny that the day may come, when something more shall be associated with the name of Homer, than the sublimity of his conceptions, and the melody of his verse. The same Being, who raised up David to chant the songs of Zion, gave existence also to the prince of Grecian bards, for ends, though widely different, yet equally wise. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Weep we should, at the perversion of talent, and in view of the eternal ruin of minds, that were once mighty on earth; still, we must not forget that God is the maker of mind.

Confucius, Zoroaster, and Socrates, were a part of the instrumentality which a superintending Providence has employed for purposes honorable to the Triune. Aristotle, with his entities and nillities, his phantasms and forms, did not live in vain. The ability of Demosthenes to be eloquent, came from the same source as did his

Whose lips the seraph touch'd with fire,  
From off the glowing altar brought.

Again, we say, let us mourn over the degradation of great minds, but let us not exclude them from the pale of humanity, nor imagine them beyond the Divine ken or purpose; wandering stars are *stars*, though astray. They may never cease to be out of a safe orbit; yet, in all their endless career, they are stars.

The impiety, which ranks the renowned men of antiquity with Jesus Christ, is almost too great to be forgiven; yet it will not answer for us to assign them another origin than our own. "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" With unfeigned thanksgiving we should prize the holy light which shines on our pilgrimage path, and drop a sympathetic tear on the tomb of those great, in all achievements, except such as are the result of faith.

*God intended we should see him Everywhere.*

He is in all places at all times. *All* is not God — but God is in *all*. By him are held the central suns, and rolled around the ponderous planets. Seasons come and go, as he directs. The Most High speaks; then the north winds retire, and the zephyrs come; genial rays unlock the earth's long-bound bosom; the fettered streams break loose their bonds; the bird returns from its winter retreat; the wild beast comes out of his den; man goes forth to his toil; the air is filled with notes of praise, and *heaven* seems descending to earth. It is the Lord that awakens into life, at the return of each spring, myriads of happy songsters; and sets in tune numberless voices of the musical tribes, from the cricket, that chirps under the window, to the chief bird-singer, that fills the air with its melodious strains. Under the watchful eye and ceaseless care of the Almighty, are reared the plants of summer. He imparts to the pink its fragrance, paints the colors of the rose, gives fingers to the vine, and spreads a carpet of thousand beauties over the entire face of nature. In autumn, he ripens the apple, mellows the pear, gives flavor to the peach, and prepares all the variety of products for the garner. The infinite Ruler speaks in the cold of winter. Every chilling blast of wind admonishes the living that the dreary night of death, and the sternness of the grave, are near. The sifting snows suggest the winding sheet; the shut-up way points to the end of life.

God commands the morning, and causes the day-spring to know its place; he sends forth the leading star, and flushes the sky with presages of the king of day, ere he is seen "re-joicing in the east." His are

"The clouds, that seem like chariots of saints,  
By fiery coursers drawn, as brightly hued



As if the glorious, bushy, golden locks  
Of thousand cherubim had been shorn off  
And on the temples hung of morn and eve."

And his, too, are the colors that change and sport around the place where Nature's great *orb* retires, having run his race. By God, were the heavens spread out as a curtain; by him are they garnished with beauty. He marshals every star, binding the sweet influences of Pleiades, and loosing the bands of Orion; bringing forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guiding Arcturus with his sons. Jehovah rides upon the wings of the wind, presides in the tempest, speeds the thunders, hurls the lightning, forms the drops of rain, and pours them down in refreshing showers, or congeals them into hailstones and snow.

God speaks, and dark'ning clouds the sky ascend;  
In night, the heav'ns are veiled; in fearful sport,  
Fork'd lightnings dart, and pealing thunders roll.  
*Touch'd mountains* smoke; the ocean heaves, and waves  
In angry surges rise, — earth rocks and shakes,  
To centre shakes. Beneath, above, around,  
Appear the harbingers of greater wrath;  
On all, dismay and consternation seize.  
Again God speaks; dense darkness flies apace,  
The lightnings cease, the thunders die, the sky  
Is seen, the sea is calm'd, the earth is still'd,  
Man's fears depart, and all is peace.

In the moral world, the Almighty must be recognized in every event. Nothing occurs without his superintending presence.

Every object is made by God, and for himself. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." His own glory is kept in view, as certainly when he forms a crystal, as when he makes a planet; is as actually before him when he gives life to an insect, as when



he creates a soul. The methods by which the Deity reveals himself are his works, his providence, and his word. Correct and enlarged views of him can be attained only by careful attention to all these modes of development.

“Ye curious minds, who roam abroad,  
And trace creation's wonders o'er,  
Confess the footsteps of the God;—  
Bow down before him and adore.”

The works of nature, the manifestations of providence, the law on the heart, and the Bible, like the four rivers which went out of Eden, all proceed from one source.

History presents many startling examples of superstition and bigotry, which were legitimate results of a neglect to study the works, at least of not recognizing God in the works, of nature. For example, in the sixteenth century Galileo was a victim of the severest persecution, on account of discoveries made by him in the science of astronomy. “When past the age of threescore and ten years, he was obliged by the priests, standing on his knees over the Bible, to disclaim belief in a system to which he had devoted his days, and which had filled his soul with the most exalted conceptions of nature, and its divine Author. For maintaining that the earth turns on its axis, he was condemned, by a board of cardinals, to perpetual imprisonment.” Bacon led the way to better times. After him arose Newton, and made important discoveries. *Arose*, did I say? He was *raised* up, to teach the world that the God of the Bible and the God of nature are the same. The following couplet is extravagant; yet suggestive of an important truth.

“Nature, and nature's laws, were sunk in night,  
God said, Let Newton be, and all was light.”

Instead of the mere *cælum aptum stellis* of the ancients, we now see in every star a world, or a sun, about which worlds

revolve. Newton disputed the claim of the infidel to the material universe; nay, he wrested it from impious hands. The infidel must now, in order to defend his own system, prove *not* true, what Newton has shown to be *unquestionable* truth. But, alas, for the infidel! even the stars, in their courses, fight against him.

The Bible may, in a sense, be regarded as a key to what is recorded in Nature; or, to change the figure, it is the thread which guides through the labyrinth of Nature's works. The infidel rejects the *key*, how then can he understandingly investigate the works of Nature? He refuses to be guided by *the thread*, why should he not be lost and bewildered in the maze? The Christian has the *key*, he should enter in and explore the arcana of Nature, for God is there; he should trace the windings of the labyrinth, for Jehovah constructed it. All departments of nature should be investigated, for they all show us the wonder-working God.

“Above — below — where'er I gaze,  
Thy guiding finger, Lord, I view,  
Traced in the midnight planet's blaze,  
Or glistening in the morning dew;  
Whate'er is beautiful or fair,  
Is but thine own reflection there.”

But I must invite the reader to commune a while with himself, for he has within many tokens of the everywhere present God. Long has the stupid atheist speculated without reserve on the origin, the nature, and the destiny of the human race. In his estimation, man had no higher parentage than the lowest order of animals; indeed, was, as some have taught, once a quadruped. As for *mind*, he has none, distinct from matter, and thoughts are the result of a material organization. Had man, physiologically and intellectually, been made a study, the infidel, if not himself convinced of the divine origin of our race, might have less boldly ridiculed the

admiration of those who contemplate the peculiar combination of matter and mind, which constitute human beings, and the *christian* would less frequently have forgotten that man is the noblest work of God on the earth ; nor would he as now, seemingly, more than half adopt the atheist's view.

However ineffectual the attempt may be, fully to unravel the inexplicable mysteries of our nature, to leave it *wholly* unexplored is to neglect an important field of research. — Though but an atom in the aggregate of nature, man is an atom of no ordinary value. As a sentient being, he holds an intimate relation to the *radiant* CENTRE of the universe ; as a moral, accountable agent, he has interests, which are as enduring as the throne of God, and as solemn as eternity. The material and mental elements of our existence are so combined, as to make a human being a fit apparatus for exhibiting the most sublime, as well as the most difficult experiments that are performed in the laboratory of Nature. None, but the great Operator himself, could have so skilfully adjusted the instrument to the end. Matter, moulded by the forming fingers of the Deity, receives into all its complicated parts, a living, acting, and intelligent soul, and the two seem to unite with a more than chemical exactness, yet remain distinct, unchanged by the union.

The more carefully we scrutinize the structure of the human body, the clearer is the evidence that God formed it, and that none but he *could have formed it*. To test the truth of this assertion, stand by the anatomist, while, by a careful dissection, he unfolds a human frame. Nicely separating part from part, he exhibits the tissues and muscles, the cords and nerves, together with the vital properties and functions of each. Trace, also, the *operations* of the *heart*, with its auricles and ventricles, dilations and contractions, propelling the blood by a twofold circulation through the system. Follow the vital fluid, as it passes from the heart into the arteries,

from the arteries into the capillaries, from the capillaries into the veins, and back in these to the heart, whence it came. — Analyze it; each drop is composed of globules, each globule of molecules, each molecule contains numberless animalcules, and each animalcule was formed, and is sustained, by that Being who made and upholds the universe. With microscopic attention examine the eye, with its “score of contingencies.” That toilet mirror is not uselessly employed, in which is contemplated this chief-d’œuvre of the divine Artificer.

In *intellect*, man still bears the impress of his Maker. Possessed of exalted powers, he can employ them on the varied objects of thought, which come before him. He fathoms the ocean, and analyzes the earth; measures the heavens, and numbers the stars. Ranging the universe, he can follow the chain which links revolving world to world, in the several systems, and which binds these systems to the throne of God. — Intellect is probably capacitated for endless progression. Who can say but the child may yet arrive higher in the scale of knowledge than has as yet the most talented angel? As a *moral* being, too, man is doubtless capable of endless progression. Though having once lost, he may regain the image of his God. It is *possible* for him to dwell eternally in the presence of his Creator, and participate in those joys which are forevermore.

#### GOD IS LOVE.

Thus inspiration teaches; the fact is recorded by infallibility, and can be reasonably questioned neither in hell, earth, or heaven. As a fact certain, the statement should be everywhere received. Brief is the expression, but comprehensive; it flowed naturally from the pen of the sacred writer, and it finds easy utterance by human lips. So few letters never

comprehended greater meaning. No three words of time can unfold more the nature of Him inhabiting eternity.—What, beyond this, could angelic forms of speech communicate in three syllables?

*God is Love.* Such he is immutably. Let thought go back to the utmost distance conceivable; let it penetrate those eternal ages, in which Jehovah dwelt alone; then God was love. Imagination, stretch thy tireless wings down the vista of future, endless years; see the infinite “I AM,” amid the accumulated glories of his kingdom; hear the anthems breaking from myriads, that no angel can number; then and there it is as true as now, God is love. The fact, so briefly expressed, is perpetual, embracing the entireness of the Divine existence.—God *was* love; he *is* love, and he *will be* love.

*The Fact viewed with reference to the Past.*

God *was* love, when he framed the arches of heaven, and called into being those everlasting hills, bounding the horizon of the holy world. He was love, when he peopled that realm of his empire with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim. God was love, when he planned and perfected the walls of hell; and during every step of the progress in the erection of the prison of the universe. God was love, so long as holy intelligences were harmonious in his praise; and he was love, when somewhere, amid the royal ranks, a note of discord was struck. God was love, when, by omnipotent energy, he banished from abodes of happiness the rebel spirits, and bound them in everlasting chains.

God *was* love, when he called out of chaos this goodly orb, the earth, making it a paradise fit for angels, and placing upon it man, formed in the image of the Maker. God was love, while the human pair lived happy in the blissful bowers of Eden. He was love, amid the mournful events that constitute



the fall and the expulsion of the first sinners. God was love, when he smiled upon the offering of Abel, and rejected that of Cain. He was love, when listening to the cry of the first martyr's blood, as it was heard ascending from the ground; nor was he otherwise, while placing the reprobate's mark on the first murderer. The Most High was love, during the hundreds of years in which sin reigned before the flood; he was the same, when he opened the windows of heaven, broke up the fountains of the great deep, and deluged this globe. — Jehovah was love, on that memorable occasion, when he listened to the petitions of Abraham for the guilty cities; nor was he otherwise, when he poured fire upon those same cities and consumed them. He was love, when he sent angels to rescue Lot, and flames to consume the Sodomites; when he secured the deliverance of two daughters, and converted their mother into a pillar of salt. The Lord was love, in the ten-fold inflictions upon Pharaoh, and in the entire overthrow of that persecutor's army. A God of love prepared a dry channel through the sea for one people, and brought back the flood upon another. He was love, when he called waters from the rock, and serpents from their dens; when he rained manna from the skies, and scattered pestilence in the wind; when he darted his lightning upon the offerers of strange fire, and when he filled the tabernacle with his glory. That Being was love, who destroyed the Canaanites, and planted in Palestine the posterity of Jacob. God was love, when he poured his blessings upon the twelve tribes; nor was he otherwise, when, by successive judgments, he scattered them through all the nations. He was love, during all the time in which Jerusalem received his protection, and when he let in upon its sacredness hordes of heathen. God was love, when, from the opening heavens, he said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" nor was he different, when that same Son exclaimed, amid the agonies of crucifixion, "My God, my God,

why hast thou forsaken me !” Love characterized Jehovah during that period of unparalleled prosperity, enjoyed by the primitive church ; also while she sat subsequently for ages in sackcloth.

*With reference to the Present.*

God *is* love, when the sky is clear, and when it is veiled in tempestuous clouds ; when the fertilizing showers descend, and when hailstones desolate the earth ; when Nature smiles, and when she frowns. God is love, while propitious gales safely waft the richly-freighted vessel ; nor is he otherwise, when he sinks the same in the waves. In the overturnings of the nations, the Lord is love. He elects one people to the enjoyment of high privileges, and abandons another to perpetual desolation ; yet he is love. Now, he sweeps into eternity thousands by a plague, and now he checks that destroyer. Here, he empties a habitation of every occupant, resigning at once a father and a mother, with their children, to places in the chambers of death ; and there, a family circle remains for years unbroken. In one instance, wealth is caused to flow in like a flood ; in another, it is swept away as by a tornado. The Lord gives life and takes away life. He afflicts or consoles ; sends anguish or assuages grief ; yet in all, he is love. Upon one community he pours out his Spirit abundantly ; while another, and contiguous, is left in religious dearth. In sovereignty, he selects this individual to be a recipient of grace, while that is allowed to harden in transgression ; and, in so doing, he is love, equally, in each and every case.

*With reference to the Future.*

God *will be* love, when he shall gather over the earth the terrors of the last day. To judgment, the dead of every age, and country, and nation, shall be summoned — “not one soul

forgot or missing," — and a division of the human family will be made for eternity ; this class being banished from the presence of Jehovah, and that welcomed into blessedness enduring, endless. Still, in these transactions, God will be love ; nor will he be otherwise, in the distant future, though the smoke of the wicked's torment shall ascend up forever and ever. — Such as die impenitent, must be excluded always from heaven ; yet God will be love, onward and onward, while ceaseless ages pursue their interminable career.

God is love ; and he is *holy*, perfectly and perpetually, — therefore his love is holy, and can delight only in holiness. Impious is the thought, that, because God is love, he can exercise complacency in what is sinful. He may compassionate the ill-deserving ; this he has done for redemption, purposed and performed, shows how the Almighty feels for the sinful, yet on probation. But he can have no delight in transgressors, who remain such. His very nature necessitates him to repel, wholly from him, the lovers of sin ; he cannot fellowship them. God is love, and he loves himself supremely ; not to do it, would prove him erring, for he only is worthy of being loved supremely ; and the Holy One could not do an unworthy deed, without evidencing that himself does not merit the highest homage. Let but one fallen angel, or only one still rebellious man be taken into heaven, and all the holy of the universe might reasonably regard the act as treason, on the part of the Highest, against his own government, and would they not be authorized to oppose the unrighteous admittance ?

God is love ; yet the fact proves nothing in regard to the ultimate condition of mankind. In the light of reason, future punishment may be as consistent with the character of the Almighty, with the perfection of his nature, as is future happiness. The condition of intelligent, accountable beings, in another state of existence, depends upon something besides the truth that God is love. Eternal happiness is connected

with holiness. Such is, doubtless, everywhere a fact ; indeed, it is not conceivable that a holy agent should be unhappy. — Whether, then, those who have lived in time are to be happy or not in eternity, can be determined only by a foresight of their moral characters in that state of existence. It does not follow, that they will there be holy, and, consequently, happy, because God is love. Future eternal wretchedness may as well consist with this fact in regard to him, as does the amount of misery experienced in time. Why should love preclude suffering in the future state, any more than it does in the present ? It is a fact that God is love ; nor is it less a fact, that mankind endure a variety and constant succession of evils, in this probationary scene. The Scriptures also assure us that such as die impenitent, will inevitably be subject to never-ending woes, after the death of the body.

*The relation of this truth to Evangelical Doctrines.*

That God is love, evangelical believers all fully admit. It is a truth lying at the foundation of the orthodox system ; and that system of doctrines, called Calvinistic, is based upon it. According to this scheme, the supreme Being was prompted solely by inherent goodness, to give existence to rational creatures, capable of holiness. It could not add to his own enjoyment, to bring into being dependent agents ; but it might diffuse genuine pleasure through many worlds. Calvinism maintains that infinite benevolence has actuated the Deity in all his works ; his nature, as love, is never laid aside, is never infringed ; yea, love is inscribed everywhere in his dominions. A love of holiness, the adherents of this class of doctrines can see in all the inflictions beneath which despairing spirits writhe. Love created ; love redeemed ; love sanctifies ; love saves the saint, and love damns the sinner ; love flows from the Triune, diffusing itself in the immensity of his empire,



for "his whole nature, his will, his works, and his word, are love." The punishments of the lost are less tolerable, to such as experience them, because they are endured with a consciousness that not revenge, but love, decrees them. — Damned souls know that heaven's gates were once opened to them, and that it was perseverance in sin which caused a God of love to debar them forever from his holy kingdom.

*The Use made of it by Errorists.*

Individuals and sects, embracing the most hurtful religious errors, declaim much about the love of God. Evidently, however, their ideas are confused. On this point, and in regard to the entire government of the supreme Ruler, they seem utterly destitute of definite views. God is love; but what bearing has the fact on the main positions of heretical systems? He does not, he cannot, approve of their rejecting essential truth, and embracing the most pernicious heresies.

Some degree of reflection and observation, has persuaded the writer that those who continually urge the fact, that God is love, as a defence of their own erroneous notions in religion, are often insincere in their assertions; they do not themselves believe God is love; for some, perhaps many of the number, do not, in heart, receive the sentiment, that there is a God. Illustrations of my statement are coming to light. Depend upon it, whoever, to oppose the idea of future endless punishment, insists continually that God is love, a truth which no evangelical christian doubts, has not a full persuasion of the Divine existence; probably he is an atheist, at least, atheistic in his thoughts and life.



*This Divine Attribute Harmonizes with the Others.*

God is love ; so he is omniscient, omnipresent, omnipotent, infinitely wise, and perfectly just. The Almighty can do nothing inconsistent with his love, nor can he perform aught which clashes with the attribute of justice. He loves right so much, that wrong cannot be committed anywhere with impunity. As soon will the ways of God transgress his goodness as his righteousness. Jehovah is a perfect being, and the administration of his government challenges the minutest inspection from men, angels, and alien spirits. That is the true system of theology, which receives God in the greatness and entirety of his attributes. Whoever embraces such divinity, will exhibit a well-balanced character ; and a chief characteristic of the person will be humility. He will reverence and adore, fear and love the God whom the Bible reveals ; being satisfied with all that is made known concerning both the *unity* and the *trinity* of *his* nature, who is infinitely above mortals ; yet who condescends to dwell with the contrite. No man can know aught, respecting his Creator, which that Being has not, in some way, communicated to him ; and no true child of God will reject a single fact, that his heavenly Father has revealed. Meekly and joyfully does such an individual hang on the Divine will.

God is love ; how happy are they who possess those moral requisites, by which they can be embraced in his complacency forever ! Angels of light, blessed are ye ! Saints at home, beyond the sun, your dwelling is in the bosom of infinite love. Probationers, seize the gracious hours allotted you to prepare to delight, world without end, in the measureless love of Jehovah. O ye devouring fires, fanned, eternally fanned by the God who declares himself love, shall we become your fuel ? Must we be always consuming, never consumed ? Thou Lamb

of God, thou manifestation of the Father's love to us ; thou, who, by thy death, didst provide reconciliation, sprinkle us by thine own atoning blood. Baptizing Spirit, Holy Ghost, change our vile natures, that we may delight in the God of love, and he in us. Ye penitent and pardoned, ye pilgrims for Zion, press onward and upward. Yon gate of glory opens into the world where the God of love displays, in cloudless brightness, his infinite perfections, enter in and be forever blessed.

## WORSHIP GOD.

It is a well-established *fact*, that mankind will pay religious homage to some being or object. Their conduct, for six thousand years, is an illustration of the fact. However various may be the reasons assigned in accounting for it, of its existence, there is unquestionable proof. We may suppose, that the moral nature of man impels him to adore something, and that originally his affections, instinctively, were given to the Lord his maker. That there is but one being to whom divine service should be paid, reason, as well as revelation, must admit. No creature, animate or inanimate, is suitable to be regarded as a God. The great scriptural requirement, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," commends itself to the candid judgment of every intelligent, accountable agent. The one Jehovah is the supreme Being, from whom all things proceed ; in whom they exist, and for whom they were created and are sustained. His sceptre is universal ; his law is unchangeable. The *position* occupied by the Almighty, entitles him to the highest honors his creatures can render. Nor less imperious is the claim presented by his *character*. God is great in wisdom. It were impossible for him to be more wise than he is. He is also infinitely good ; *is love itself*. Other-

wise, than in being devoted to his service, men must be unhappy. Common prudence suggests the duty of a specific regard to one's own weal, present and future. Justice is an attribute of the Deity, by which he will punish the neglecters of the means whereby themselves may be everlastingly benefited, and his own glory reflected.

To worship God, is the perpetual employment of angels, and of the spirits of the just made perfect. They never rest from the all-engrossing employment of praise. Casting their crowns before the throne, they say, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power." No moral agent can ever be released from the obligation to love God with all the heart, and to serve him with every faculty.—Never, for a moment, in time, or in eternity, will the command, touching the duty, be withdrawn. Hell is no retreat from the everywhere-reaching edict, respecting the worship of the Most High. Devils *will not* love the Being by whom they were expelled, for sin, from their celestial seats; yet they are under the same law, in their prison, that ruled them when they were spirits of light. Men may be lost to help and to hope, but they cannot go beyond the reach of the Divine command. Nor shall a rational creature ever be able to present a justifiable excuse for not complying with it. Those condemned at the bar of the *Judge*, will find conscience and reason approving endlessly *that* verdict.

Ye, that would not experience, eternally, the dreadful consequences, following the refusal to worship the Most High, make his service your daily employment. Bow before this universal King. Give him the heart, and to him make a consecration of your all. Let your souls no longer be degraded, by giving to earthly objects the affections due only to him whose dominion is everlasting. Surmount, in your aspirations, these terrestrial attractions. Behold that spotless throne of the Deity, and become at once a suppliant before it; that you

may now, and in ceaseless ages, through the merits of the Mediator, rejoice in the presence of him who sits upon it.

## ATHEISM.

Evidence of the existence of an all-wise, omnipotent, and infinitely benevolent Being, is clear and full. It is difficult to conceive how proof, in regard to any question, could be more direct and comprehensive. Hence, it is manifest that the doctrine, that there is a supreme Ruler in the universe, the creator and upholder of all things, cannot be denied by any rational creature, unless his intellect is strangely disordered, or his moral nature most dreadfully debased. To assert, there is no God, indicates the direst *stupidity*, or the height of arrogance. No finite being can know there is not a God; "because there cannot, possibly, be conceived any demonstration of that negative proposition." On the supposition, that we are unable to prove his existence, it does not follow that none exists. *We must know all things, in order to be sure there is no God.* He may be *somewhere*, if he be not *everywhere*. *Non-existence, in respect to him, cannot be proved, should it appear probable.*

Yet, there are some persons, having the external appearance of human beings, who deny the existence of a God. — These are called atheists; and the appellation is derived from the Greek letter *a*, *negative*, and the word Θεός, God, which, in their compound state, mean *without a God*. As no man disbelieves in the Divine existence for want of proof, it is natural to inquire whence the origin of atheism. How is it that a doctrine so important, and so well supported, is rejected?

A *book* of many leaves, on each of which is the stamp of its superhuman origin, states, that "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." From this we infer, that the *heart*



is the source of atheistic sentiments, and that it is only the *fool's* heart which can cherish them in their incipient state. Much more is it true, that none other can ever give them birth. An old writer remarks, that "no man will say, *there is no God*, till he is so hardened in sin, that it becomes his interest that there should be none, to call him to account." — Some eminent divine has observed, that "he who denies the Divine existence, renounces, by that very act, his own humanity, falls out of the rank of rational beings, and covets community and fellowship with brutes." None but *fools* can assert there is no God. "For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse."

The *atheist* proclaims himself a *fool*, and every object in nature attests the truth of his proclamation. "As to the being of a God, where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must be for ever indisputable." His existence no more admits of a candid doubt, than does our own.

#### *Theories of Atheists.*

As the world, with its vast variety of beings and objects, is in existence, some account of its origin and history is to be expected from atheists ; and since their system, "in all its forms, is a specimen of the most absolute credulity," we must not be surprised at any absurdities broached by them in defence of their baseless positions. They have presented three great schemes ; by one of which they attempt to account for the origin of all creatures. The first is, "that things have existed in an *eternal series* ;" the second, "that their existence is *casual* ;" the third, "that all distinct or separate beings owe their existence to the *powers and operations of matter*." Neither of these has a particle of proof in its favor ;



“each is refuted by direct demonstration; *they are unanswerably proved to be not only false, but impossible.*”

Atheists ascribe the highest attributes to *matter*; not considering that it is out of their power to prove its existence. “*I myself believe, indeed, that it exists, but I also know that its existence cannot be proved.*” \* These arrogant assumers maintain that creation is no great affair; while to Aristotle, whose powers of mind were far greater than theirs, creation itself “appeared too difficult a work for even God himself to perform it.” Whatever be the theory propounded by atheists, it is marked by a reckless disregard of the plainest principles of reason and common sense.

#### *The Object of Atheists.*

By their zealous efforts in maintaining certain characteristic dogmas, it is evident, that they desire to convince all men,—“that the soul is material and mortal; christianity an imposture; the Scriptures a forgery; the worship of God superstition; hell a fable, and heaven a dream; our life without providence, and our death without hope.” Whoever carefully examines into its nature will not doubt, that “the proper, natural, and necessary influence of atheism, is to contract and render grovelling the views; to corrupt the character, and to deform the life of man.”

To all, not yet plunged into this abyss, but who may be in danger of its artifices, we say, in the language of an able defender of truth, “Settle it, therefore, in your minds, as a maxim never to be effaced or forgotten, that atheism is an inhuman, bloody, ferocious system, equally hostile to every useful restraint, and to every virtuous affection; that, leaving nothing above us to excite awe, nor around us to awaken ten-

---

\* Dr. Dwight.

derness, it wages war with heaven and with earth; its first object is to dethrone God, its next, to destroy man." Such is thy aim, thou denier of the existence of him who made thee and sustains thee! O wert thou not so puny, naught of excellence could stand before thee! Down upon thy face in shame! Insult creation no more by gazing upon it!

"Traitor to all existence, to all life!  
Soul-suicide! Determined foe of being!  
Intended murderer of God, Most High!"

## JESUS CHRIST.

### *Christ was a Man.*

HE is in the Scriptures designated as a man. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 2 : 5. He is said to have come in the likeness of sinful flesh ; that is, in human nature. Romans, 8 : 3. And to be of the seed of David. Romans, 1 : 3. It is also stated that he suffered in the flesh. 1 Peter, 3 : 18.—He styles himself, the *Son of Man*, by which term he teaches, that he possesses true human nature. There are "no less than seventy-one instances, in which Christ is called Son of man ; in sixty-seven of these, the title is given by himself ; once by Daniel, once by Stephen, and twice by John, in the Revelation." \*

All the evangelists, in recording the doings of Christ, employ language that implies he was really a man ; though it does not teach that he was no more than a mere man. They speak of him as having the senses of a man. He saw with such eyes as mankind in general possess ; and heard as they hear. All the properties of a human being were his. He was conscious of hunger and of thirst ; he ate and drank ; was wearied by toil, and refreshed by food and repose. He felt pain, and naturally shrunk from enduring it. The susceptibilities of a man were as manifestly in him as in any mere

---

\* Dr. Dwight.

man. With the afflicted he wept; and he rejoiced with such as were in possession of real joy. The developments of his mind were, in general, according to the laws regulating mental operations in other persons. Should it be objected, that, in the commencement of his earthly existence, a marked contrast appears between him and other human beings; the reply is, that in this respect he differs no more from the human family, than did the original father of the race; yet Adam was as truly a man as has been any individual of his posterity. Christ very early gave proof of possessing a real human nature. He increased in stature, and in mental power, as other children do; except, in the latter respect, his progress was more rapid and remarkable than theirs. In the words of another, "the history of his birth, life, and death, is unanswerable proof that Christ was man; he was born, lived, and died, essentially in the same manner as other men; he increased in wisdom as well as in stature; wrought with his hands; ate, drank, slept; suffered on the cross, gave up the ghost, and was buried, in the same manner as other men."

*Christ was more than a Man.*

No one can read his life, and be in doubt in regard to the fact. It is as evident that he was far superior to any other man, as that he was a real man. His existence, prior to his appearing on earth, is most clearly asserted in the sacred volume. As, many of the passages relating to this point bear directly on another position, subsequently to be considered, they will not all here be quoted at length.

The opening verses in the gospel, as presented by John, explicitly teach the doctrine of Christ's *preëxistence*. In the writings of the same evangelist, 17: 5, is the following: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Jesus

speaks of himself as having come down from heaven. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven." John, 3: 13. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." 6: 38. "What, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" 6: 62. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." Phil. 2: 5, 6. He is represented as passing from a higher to a lower condition, when he entered this world. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." John, 1: 14. "And took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. Phil. 2: 7. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." 2 Cor. 8: 9. Such representations of God's infallible Book, teach, without reserve, that he who appeared as the man of sorrows on earth, had been highly exalted before he came among mortals. He was in great dignity, and surrounded with glory such as the earth never witnesses; but he divested himself of it. Dwelling originally far above human habitations, he came down and made his abode with man. *He humbled himself.* Most clearly does the history, which shows us that he was possessed of a nature really human, also assure us that he had another nature far more elevated.

*Christ was truly God.*

It must be conceded by all, that nothing is known determinative respecting this point, except what is communicated by a special revelation. Not a ray of light beams from any other source; no other oracle utters a response to our interrogatories. The office of reason here consists in discovering the genuine import of the Scripture teachings in regard to him.



*The Scriptures call Christ God.*

While the Divine oracles leave not the least room for doubt, that he was truly man, he is designated by the very titles which are applied to the Father. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John, 1 : 1. That, by Word, in this connection, Christ is meant, seems very manifest, from the fourteenth verse of the same chapter. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." What candid mind can harbor a doubt in regard to the import of this passage? "And we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." 1 John, 5 : 20. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." Romans, 9 : 5. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Heb. 1 : 8.

*The Scriptures ascribe Eternal Existence to Christ.*

He was in the beginning. When nothing created had begun to exist, he then had a being. His own express declarations are in point. "Before Abraham was, I am." The "I AM" here corresponds with that in Exodus, 3 : 14. "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." In the manifestation made to the apostle John, on the isle of Patmos, a voice said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev. 22 : 13. These, undoubtedly, are the words of Christ, and we find the Most High employing similar phraseology in reference to himself. "Thus saith the Lord, the king of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts ; I am the first, and I am the last ; and besides me there is no God." Isa. 44 : 6.

*Almighty Power is attributed to Christ.*

“For our conversation is in heaven ; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.” Phil. 3 : 20, 21. “All things were made by him ; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” John, 1 : 3. He is said to uphold all things by the word of his power. Heb. 1 : 3. He asserts, that he has power to lay down his own life, and to take it again. — We are taught, by authority unquestionable, that, in several instances, he actually raised the dead ; and giving life is a prerogative peculiar to God ; for creative power can belong to no finite agent. Yet Christ was the Creator of the earth, and of the heavens. The connection will not permit us to doubt that the following averment refers to him. “And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth ; and the heavens are the works of thine hands.” Heb. 1 : 10.

*Christ is represented as Omniscient.*

“He knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.” John, 2 : 24, 25. “Lord, thou knowest all things.” John, 21 : 17. This prayer, “Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men,” was evidently offered to Christ. Acts, 1 : 24. It is said, that he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart. 1 Cor. 4 : 5. Furthermore, we are taught, that he will judge the world at the last day, rendering to every man according to his works. How can this service be performed by the Son of God, if he do not

know all things? He is designated as the Judge; and, if he be the Judge, in order to execute justice, he must be omniscient. Now, if Christ be omniscient, then he possesses one of the attributes of the infinite God; if one, why not all? Are they not inseparable and incommunicable?

*The Scriptures teach us that Christ is Omnipresent.*

The doctrine is presented by himself in the following passages. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18: 20. Should there be such little companies scattered over the entire globe, at the same time, in each Jesus would be present. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." 28: 20. The true ministers of Jesus know the import of this declaration on the part of their Master. He is with them in every place.

*Divine Honors are given to Christ.*

It is written, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1: 6. Likewise it is predicted, that the universe of created beings shall do him homage, and crown him Lord of all. The Saviour explicitly states, "That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him." The apostles addressed prayers to Jesus, after his ascension. To him, the dying Stephen presented this petition, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." The request of Paul, that the thorn in his own flesh might be removed, was directed to him. Frequently, the Father and the Son are unitedly addressed, "Now God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way unto you." 1 Thess. 3: 11. "Peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Cor.

1 : 3. How may we regard the following? “And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.” Rev. 5 : 11, 12.

Well has a foreign divine remarked, “If Jesus Christ be not God, the Bible was framed to deceive. The writers must have intended to exalt their master at the expense of truth.”

Reader, what will you do with Jesus? Can you say otherwise than did Thomas : “My Lord and my God?” Beware how you esteem him, who came in the form of a servant, but was the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of his person. By some he is regarded as a mere man ; others allow him a grade a little above simple humanity ; and a few congratulate themselves that they assign him a rank so high, that, in their estimation, he is just as near being God as he can be, and yet not actually be God. This latter class ought to reflect that between an infinite being and one who is not infinite, however exalted the latter may be, *the distance is infinite*. If Jesus Christ be regarded by us, as much greater than we are, as he can be and not be God, then do we consider him as infinitely less than God ; moreover we give him a position in the universe infinitely less exalted than he claimed for himself, and which the Scriptures attribute to him.

#### CHRIST’S TEMPTATION.

At the age appointed by law, for the sons of Levi to enter upon their sacred office, Jesus was initiated into his public ministry—a priest after the order of Melchisedec. Having received the consecrating water upon his head, and being



anointed by the Holy Spirit, also being introduced by a voice from the open heavens, to the multitudes who attended his forerunner, it were natural to suppose, that he would at once begin his labors as the instructor of men. But instead of his going forth to preach, we see him hastening into a wilderness, being led thither by the Spirit. Three evangelists record the proceeding, and inform us that the design was, that he should be tempted of the devil. Forty days and as many nights, he fasted; in them, "he did eat nothing." Comparing the accounts of the sacred writers, — their phraseology varying a little — it would seem that the Saviour was variously tempted during the time definitely stated, and, that afterwards he was assailed by three special efforts. The period of fasting having terminated, Jesus, as man, was feeling the strong demands of hunger, when Satan came to him, saying, "if thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Christ's reply was in the terms of inspiration. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." His food must be whatever is divinely appointed. If bread be given, it must be received; and if that be withheld, the privation must be cheerfully endured. Let the holy will of heaven rule the body, not less than the soul. Prophets were not wont to work miracles to gratify their own appetites. Foiled in his first endeavor, the adversary attempts another. Jesus is taken to the holy city, and placed upon a pinnacle of the temple. In what manner, or how far he was conveyed, not the least specific information is given. Some suppose that the region of Sinai was the wilderness into which he was led, from his baptism; others point out a dreary tract near the Jordan; it is infertile, and consists of high rocky mountains, "torn and disordered," as if the earth had suffered a "great convulsion." Behold, on a lofty turret of Jehovah's temple stand the world's Redeemer, and the prince of darkness. With supreme arrogance, the latter



says to the former, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee; and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." The devil knoweth how to quote Scripture; still, by a leaving out, as in the present instance, or by a manifest perversion of an obvious import, he betrays a malicious intent. Christ knew how to meet this second temptation, as well as the first; in each case, his weapon of defence was an arrow from the quiver of the Almighty. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Another expedient is tried; from their lofty station, on Jerusalem's admired edifice, Jesus passes to the summit of "an exceeding high mountain." We inquire not for the mode of removal from the pinnacle to this position; revelation is not careful to gratify curiosity, and a reasonable faith is satisfied with the announcement of important facts. Lo, now the devil showeth God's beloved Son "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them—in a moment of time." There are in that section of the oriental world, where our Lord's temptation occurred, prospects far-reaching; those from which an extensive view of the world, as it then was, may be obtained. What was visible to the natural eye, might have been pointed out by the artful assailant, and the remainder only described; or it is not unreasonable to conclude, that the evil one had permission to exhibit before the Saviour's eye an exact picture of the population and wealth of the entire globe. "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me; for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it. If thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be thine." What boldness in uttering falsehoods! Now, the tempter shall be met with merited sternness. "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Can the ingenuity of the arch-fiend invent yet another mode of attack upon the world's

Deliverer? Must not hell's subtlety pause for awhile? We read: "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him." Changed, indeed, is the scene! "In the shame and confusion of a total defeat, the adversary of God and man betakes himself to flight, and hides his guilty head in the regions of darkness." From above, come messengers of kindness; they gather around him, in whom the Father is well pleased. Do they not bear in their arms the wearied, the exhausted Jesus? All that his condition required, they tenderly performed; his struggle is ended. Among the habitations of men, the Messiah begins to make himself known as the sent of God.

Yet, shall not *we* linger a little amid the scenes of his temptations? Not, however, that we may fritter away the record, but impress it more deeply in our minds, than can be done by a hasty perusal, such as we have just made. "Several eminent persons, both ancient and modern, have thought that *a visionary scene, not a real event*, is here narrated." Is such thy idea, unsophisticated reader of the inspired pages?—Verily I think not. What is this account, but a simple statement of facts; not one of which is improbable, much less impossible? If the simple detail here may be rejected, why should it fare better in other parts of the Bible? Are there difficulties, attending this account, which do not exist elsewhere? Certainly others, not a few, are equally encumbered. A revelation from heaven is necessarily, in a measure, mysterious. Shall we reject whatever is at all incomprehensible? Then we become universal skeptics; no, for *skepticism is utterly incomprehensible*. Faith in this account is far more rational than is its rejection. Not a statement occurs, in the record of the temptation, which shocks human understandings; on the contrary, each statement commends itself to the good sense of every candid inquirer for truth. Jesus came as the second Adam, in order to repair the ruin occasioned by the

first. It was a yielding to temptation, that overwhelmed the race of man, and, at the outset of redemption's work, the point must be tried, whether or not *he*, coming as the Redeemer of the ruined race, can withstand the assaults of that being by whose wiles the original parents of the human family were ensnared. If the Messiah cannot foil the adversary in the commencement of the enterprise, for which heaven was left, it will be in vain for him to attempt man's deliverance. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Who does not perceive, that every movement, in the progress of the temptation, was adroitly arranged? An appeal was first made to the appetite of hunger, sharpened by an entire fast of forty days. Christ was a man, having all the appetites and passions of our nature, though free from sin. Thoughts of food, under the circumstances named, might affect him as strongly as they would any other person, similarly situated. Vanity, and love of display were tested, when the Saviour was exhorted to cast himself down from a high point of the temple. Perhaps the devil supposed the idea, of appearing to come direct from the skies, would strike Jesus favorably. Thousands of people might have been, at the moment, thronging about the sacred edifice, all of whom were expecting the promised Saviour. Could one doubt his arrival, if suddenly he had alighted in their midst, from some unknown region above them? In the final effort, that desire for wealth and power, ever so controlling among mortals, and by which the devil destroys millions, was addressed; but with no more success than by the preceding artifices.

We see here a fulfilment of a most ancient prophecy; "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Before us are brought to view several engagements in the great battle, predicted when the prince of hell converted the earth into an empire of his own; the fulfilment of which was then far

in the future of time. Reason perceives the importance of these transactions, at the very threshold of Christ's entrance upon his mission, even *for his sake*; and nothing could be more natural, than for Satan to wish to resist the beginnings of the overthrow of his own empire. What a moment of everlasting interest was that, in which the tempter said: "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." Intensely anxious for the result, holy angels hovered over the place; and demons, in myriads, were hoping and fearing in respect to the issue. The hallowed throng, who came rushing from the skies, to celebrate Immanuel's birth, perhaps now anxiously wait to strike anew their harps of praise, or to perform the dirge of the Redeemer lost, and of the world sealed up to remediless despair. Silence, profound, reigns in all their ranks; but hark, the response of Jesus, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

"Lo, the angelic host rejoices;  
Heavenly hallelujahs rise."

Perhaps more of importance was centred in the scenes of Satan's first bold assaults on the Messiah, than in any other since the dawn of human existence. Hell's champion was completely resisted in each of his well-constructed schemes. Mortified, he must have been, to rehearse, when returned, his own failures. His hope of future success surely became dim; though he is set upon wearying even those who, he is assured, cannot be destroyed by him.

This wilderness struggle may be regarded as an essential element in the purpose of God, concerning the Messiah. An atonement was the chief event to be accomplished; yet there were many other subordinate ones. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet



without sin." Three scenes of peculiar distress marked the history of the meek Redeemer, whose whole career was sorrowful. One was his struggle in the desert with Satan; another, the agony in Gethsemane; and the last, his ignominious death, by crucifixion. Christ is not merely a Saviour; he helps the harassed. "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Whatever are the efforts of their adversary, the disciples of Jesus may hear him saying, "Be of good cheer." Relying on him,—

"A feeble saint shall win the day;  
Tho' death and hell obstruct the way."

In his temptation, the Saviour has left an example for all who would inherit the promises. They are taught how to repel attacks. Weapons employed by him, are in their power. He fasted and prayed, and wielded "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Resist, ye heirs of light, the devil with these means, and he will depart from you. Let every renewed attempt be met in a like manner, and equal success shall ensue. But ye must not allow the least yielding to the temptations of Satan. Plausible are many of his suggestions; he can allure and deceive; millions are dazzled and destroyed by his arts, and he zealously seeketh your souls.

#### CHRIST'S TRANSFIGURATION.

Some time prior, and, in certain respects, preparatory to the bloody scenes of Calvary, occurred the event designated in the above caption. The import of the term employed, is developed by the inspired narrative. With a select company of his disciples, Jesus ascended a high mountain, which, according to tradition, was Tabor, in Galilee, rising from the great plain of Esdraelon; but, according to modern investi-



gation, it could not have been Tabor. Inspiration has wisely left us unacquainted with the exact locality. God graciously guards us against an idolatrous respect for mere places, however precious are the scriptural associations connected with them. He, who was the subject of the sublime transformation, foreknew and predicted its nearness, six days before its arrival, in the following words: "Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

One express object of going into the mountain, was prayer. Three sacred writers inform us, that he took with him Peter, James, and John; and Luke states that a special motive was as just suggested. Behold the man of sorrows, attended by certain of his chosen, far removed from the excitements of the world, engaged in devout addresses to the Father; lo, his face shines as the sun, and his garments are pure as the light, "so as no fuller on earth can white them." And now, two messengers, from the celestial realms, join the retired band. Who are they? Moses and Elijah; men, than whom none were ever more renowned in the church. The first, known as the most distinguished of lawgivers; the second, preëminent among the prophets of Jehovah. Both dispensations there, and everywhere, meet in Christ. What is the theme on which these envoys from the skies converse? Nothing less than the approaching sufferings of the transfigured one. They "appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Expiation for human guilt, by the dying of God's Son, was, and is, and must forever be, the greatest of all topics among the redeemed. Coming from the blessedness secured by atoning blood, these saints, of ancient days, hold a conference concerning Christ's sacrificial death. When the ransomed of the Lord, from all nations and generations, shall have been gathered into the presence of their Redeemer, they will speak of his decease, which he did

“accomplish at Jerusalem.” The topic shall never tire, nor its interest in the least abate, as endless ages speed their ever onward course.

Alas, these clogs of clay ! While Jesus is transfigured ; while Moses and Elijah, glowing with heavenly effulgence, are communing with him, Peter and his companions are “heavy with sleep.” Tedious may have been the toils of the preceding day ; wearisome the ascent to their present position ; and perhaps it was past the noon of night, when they sunk into slumber. They lost much, while locked in unconsciousness, but “when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.” Visions of the Lamb, however bright, avail nothing to the sleeping. How great is thy daily loss, thou dull disciple ! Thy Lord is transfigured before thee, and thou knowest not the fact. Messengers from the third heavens hover about thee, and thou heedest them not. Awake, and behold the lustre of the Messiah. “It is good for us to be here,” says Peter, with characteristic animation. Yes, blessed are all they, who dwell amid the beams of Christ’s brightness, and gaze thereon with purified sight. But that ecstasy of the apostle, so natural and just, overleaps due bounds ; and yet it submits to the will of his divine Master. “If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles ; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.” “For he wist not what to say ;” or, “not knowing what he said.” — Silence is often more becoming than the wisest forms of speech that the holiest on earth can command. What Peter thus confusedly uttered, is permitted to pass without a reply. It neither helps nor hinders the wonders of the hour. — “While he thus spake, there came a cloud and overshadowed them,” which filled all the disciples with terror. This was not a dark and foreboding cloud, as were those in which Jehovah veiled himself, while he descended upon Sinai, but one of brightness. While all are enveloped amid its splendor, the

lawgiver and the prophet depart; and a voice proceeds from the cloud, proclaiming, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Overwhelmed by the sound, the disciples fall upon their faces, but Jesus draws nigh and touches them, saying, "Arise, and be not afraid." Now the transfiguration is passed; lifting up their eyes, they see no one, save him speaking. Back to their immortal bliss have gone the saints, who graced the scene by their presence; vanished is the overshadowing cloud; changed again, to its wonted form, is the face of Jesus; no longer are his garments in whiteness, as snow; the Master descends with the select company that went with him, charging them, as they come down, to reveal the vision to no man, "until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." On what account it would be unlawful to publish it before that event, except his own prohibition, he did not explain. Doubtless, the great Author of redemption proceeded always by a plan, in which each part illustrated some other. This scene, in its own place, would subserve a most valuable end. We find Peter subsequently employing it. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.—For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount." 2 Pet. 1: 16—18.

Brief is the narrative of our Lord's transfiguration.—Gladly would we peruse a more extended account. For what there is, however, we are grateful. It is comforting, thus to behold the gleamings, not only of the Redeemer's form, as he was to be, and *now* is, but also to enjoy a glimpse of the saints in their heavenly condition. Precious are the realities of the scene, as they are recorded by the evangelist. Away from a

contemplation of such sacredness, ye who cherish skeptical thoughts! Too holy is the place of transfiguration for your reckless steps. Your cold hearts can have no sympathy with Jesus at any time; certainly not when his face shines as the sun, and his raiment is white as snow. Come not near; touch not the mount! Indulge, if ye will, the impious thought, that it was all a delusion — a dream! Say, if ye must, that no reliance is to be placed on the sacred epitome of that event! — The believer knows it is true; that it cannot be otherwise, is morally certain. We will not deny that we are constrained to weep at the impiety of those, who would rob the Scriptures of their wonders. Verily we are in sadness, for such as can be suited with nothing pertaining to Jesus; him poor, they despise; him transfigured, they disown.

Forget not, disciple of Christ, to visit often that summit, where Peter found it good to be. But remember, that as Jesus went up to pray, and there poured out his soul in supplications, so thou canst ascend only by a like spirit. Much intercourse with heaven is requisite, to prepare thee for such a vision. Coldness in religion can never fit thee for a companionship with those who constituted the interest of the place and occasion. It was while the Saviour prayed, that he was transfigured; we say not, that his prayer produced the change in his person, but that the coincidence deserves remembrance, and add, that nothing, besides communion with God, exerts so direct and powerful an influence in conforming the disciple to the image of his Master. Would we be rapidly approaching a state of moral fitness, for the society of the celestial world, our days must be devoted to prayer. Holy converse, with the Lord, wings the spirit for an upward flight, and seems actually to conduct it to the celestial realms.

Meditate on the state of the heavenly visitants; they came in glory. Once, theirs was a career of trial. Moses, from infancy to his silent exit on Nebo, was subject to sorrow. The



earthly Canaan, though long sought by him, he did not enter ; to the heavenly he was welcomed. His sepulchre, no man knoweth unto this day ; yet myriads of angels, and of saints, have beheld his spirit. Elijah, too, was fiercely hunted by the haters of God, when, as a seer in Israel, he wearied himself in doing good. Unlike the great legislator's, was the departure from time, of this illustrious prophet. From the livery of the skies there came a chariot and horsemen of fire, who bore him, without dying, to heaven. Look upward, ye humble subjects of the Mediator's reign, to that high abode, whence Moses and Elijah came ; there is now the once transfigured Jesus. On the mount, he presented glimpses of what he is forever to be. Lift up your eyes, for there are the realms of day eternal, whither your spirits, when released from time, shall at once ascend. Behold, where the prophet's body was borne ; there, when the slumbers of death, prolonged for ages, shall terminate, your raised tabernacle shall live and rejoice, radiant with divine majesty. True, it doth not yet appear fully "what we shall be," still, a likeness to the Redeemer is revealed to be the lot of the redeemed.— "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." Press onward to your mansions and your bliss.

Ah, little do those know of Jesus Christ, who never ascend with him the mount of transfiguration. His sojourn on earth, that little space excepted, was a scene of *obscuration* ; through its whole extent, abating the few hours just specified, his glory was eclipsed. It was but an exhibition of his real person, when, amid his devout addresses to the throne above, his entire aspect became brightness itself. Often did his works and his word proclaim him God ; but there the Divinity, the real Shekinah, was visible. How much, too, may all, at any time, lose, who are spiritually asleep ! Immanuel can be seen only by faith's wakeful eye. What does it avail to us, if the Lord



be near, and we are incapacitated to behold his glorious presence? As well may we expect to perceive the orb of day, while we are wrapt in slumber, as to behold the Sun of Righteousness, when the soul is locked up in sinful stupor! Happy are they who, if they have slumbered, awake, ere the enrapturing displays of divine glory have wholly ceased. Oh for such manifestations of Christ as will arouse the soul. Short was the scene, on the mount of transfiguration; and brief are the bright visions, enjoyed by the Christian, below. However high he may have risen, in his secret communing with God, he must descend to the warfare of life, and meet, as did his Master, sad demonstrations of the power of evil spirits.

#### THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE.

Come, behold the Saviour in agony. The hour is approaching for his betrayal; but ere it fully arrives, he experiences sorrow which mortals cannot comprehend. Mark the place, the time, and his own exercises.

#### *Place and Time.*

It is an enclosed parcel of ground, near the holy city, divided from it by the brook Kedron, and lying either upon or at the base of the Mount of Olives, and is called the Garden of Gethsemane. Tradition points out the locality; but that, always uncertain, may have erred in this case, as well as in others. Jesus was wont to retire at night from the city, when his days had been passed therein. He came to this enclosure, whither he had oft resorted with his disciples. Doubtless, it was favorably situated for meditation and prayer.

It is night—a memorable night; more so, in some respects, than any other. That, in which occurred Israel's deliverance from Egypt, was declared worthy of being much observed.

Many wonderful events have taken place, while darkness has veiled the sky. It was at such a time, that Sennacherib's army met ruin at the hand of an angel, commissioned by Heaven to destroy. Night witnessed Belshazzar's impious festival, and also his signal death. But this is the night of the betrayal. Amid its hours occurred the strange transactions, which immediately preceded the tragedy on Golgotha. The exact moment of the agony is not specified; nor are we certified whether dismal clouds hid the heavens, or whether the stars looked brightly upon the scene. Lanterns and torches were used by the band, who came in pursuit of the agonized. What dark deeds were performed on that night! How many eyes kept ceaseless watch! Spirits, from beneath, hover over the sacred city! Him, whom men and devils have long sought to slay, is to be delivered up to their control. — The night has come, in which the long-struggling vengeance of priests and people, rulers and rabble, shall begin to empty itself on the meek, the merciful, the compassionate Jesus. Ere the morning beams shall gild the turrets of Zion, the Son of God will be within the grasp of Jewish hate.

Come, let us watch, for one hour, the world's Redeemer. Eleven disciples have attended him from that large upper room, in which they had eaten together of the Passover, and where had been instituted the sacred Supper. Eight of these were requested by their Master to remain stationary, soon after entering the garden. Three, Peter, James, and John, those who had been the eye-witnesses of his transfiguration, accompany him a little farther, until he arrests their progress by the command, "Tarry ye here, and watch with me." — His agony had already begun, for he had said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Removing a little from the three disciples — the distance of "about a stone's cast," — he first knelt down, and then prostrated himself and prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass

from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." — Arising from his prostration, he returns to the three, "and findeth them asleep." Ah, what shall we think of their condition? Luke tells us they were asleep "for sorrow;" and Jesus said to them, "The spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak;" by which he meant rather to warn than excuse them. "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" "neither wist they what to answer him." Again he withdraws, and utters the same sentiment, in words but little varied, and again he comes and finds them asleep; their eyes are heavy. O how little sympathy does the agonizing Saviour receive from his bosom friends! His enemies are awake; but the very disciples, who were the nearest to his groans, seem utterly unconscious of what he is undergoing! But there was a sympathizer near. From the ranks of the celestials an angel appeared, "strengthening him," when he was so intensely excited, that "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground." A third time he leaves them, and offers the already twice-repeated petition, and on his return, he saith, "Sleep on now, and take your rest; it is enough, the hour is come, behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." And what could the Master have meant by this? Is it a rebuke, couched in irony? The agony was past; the period, for which he had directed them to watch and pray, had expired. A new scene was beginning, and he asks not their assistance, as he shall meet the hostile array, now rapidly advancing to seize him.

*The Cause of this Agony.*

What caused the innocent Jesus to be "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death?" Why did he thrice pray for the removal of that cup, by which great suffering is figuratively expressed? No sense of personal guilt pressed upon his

spirit. Can his distress be accounted for, by considering only the externals of his condition? They were, indeed, trying; but Jesus knew how to suffer calmly. He came to earth to endure trials, unequalled in the pilgrimage of any mere man. Just before the agony, he had sung a hymn with his disciples. To suppose him unable to face the scenes before him, implies less firmness than many of the martyrs have manifested.— Paul was exposed to every species of torture, which the malice of men and devils could inflict; yet he animatedly affirmed, “None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy.” Who, of all those sealing their faith by their blood, shrank so much from a violent death, as did *he*, claiming to be the Messiah, if the prospect before him, his anticipated decease at Jerusalem, were the sole cause of his agony? “No person ought to have met death with so much constancy as Jesus Christ, if he underwent a mere ordinary death.” He had perfect confidence in God, and it was his joy to do the Divine will. Fearful forebodings of the future, he could not experience; eternity presented naught to him but visions of brightness and infinite blessedness. We must look deeper than the outward, for a solution of this mighty struggle.

Let it be remembered, that the terms employed by inspiration, to depict his anguish, are the most expressive possible. Thrice he prostrated himself upon the earth, entreating the removal of his bitter cup, if the Father's pleasure could permit; and such was the intensity of his mental and physical exertions, that his perspiration seemed like “great drops of blood, falling down to the ground.”

“Many woes had Christ endured,  
Many sore temptations met;  
Patient, and to pains inured!  
But the sorest trial yet,  
Was to be sustained in thee,  
Gloomy, sad Gethsemane!”

Whence is the explanation? What is the source of this deep and overwhelming distress? For a satisfactory reply, we must look to the object which brought the Son of God from heaven, and this was to atone for sin. Though the death on the cross was *the* event, which made expiation for human guilt, there were other connected and essential parts of the sacrifice, appointed to satisfy justice, so that rebels may live. Christ was the Lamb of God, and the hour of his sacrificial exit was at hand; even now, in the garden, the guilt of the world begins to fall upon him; a vast, oppressive, infinite burden. A new era was opening in the history of humanity; an occurrence was transpiring, which must be forever a perfect anomaly in the annals of the universe. The Father has given to the Son "a cup of wrath, a large and deep cup, that contained more wrath than was ever drank by any creature, even the wrath of an infinite God; a mixed cup, mixed with God's wrath and man's, in the extremity."

Who can calculate the amount of suffering one lost soul may endure, in the endless years of its future existence? The aggregate, then, of the eternal misery, to which the entire race would have been doomed, had no Saviour been given, must surely be out of the reach of all finite conception; yet this, in its entirety, was seen by Jesus, and felt, to a great extent. He did bear the sin of the world; it lay upon him, as he was on the cross, in a few hours subsequent to his agony in Gethsemane; and even there it may have rested a few moments on him. Then *began* to be fulfilled, more than at any previous period, this scripture statement, "Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; the chastisement of our peace was upon him." The doctrine of the atonement is the only key which will unlock the mystery of the bloody sweat and of the indescribable anguish of spirit.— We know, indeed, as previously intimated, that there were many circumstances connected with the approaching betrayal,



trial, and execution, all of which were foreseen by the Saviour, adapted to sink the spirits of a man. One disciple would surrender his Master to ruffians; another was to deny him with oaths, and the remainder were to forsake him; the Jews were to open, that day, a stream of God's vengeance, which should continue to flow through numerous generations, sweeping in its course, to perdition, multitudes of the descendants of the crucifiers. But in vain do we seek for an adequate explanation of the Gethsemane scene, in any or all of these. In view of the particulars enumerated, he had, just before entering the garden, triumphantly "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." The evils attendant upon his death, must have seemed to him as nothing, in comparison with the blessings resulting from it. We doubt not, that the keen susceptibilities of Jesus' nature felt, most intensely, every insult offered him; his flesh was, perhaps, more acutely sensitive to pain, than is ours; still, to represent him as shrinking from mere physical suffering, is not honorable to his character, as the Messiah of God. Beholding Jesus as already beginning to bear the world's transgressions, we see a cause for his almost overwhelmed state. God must hide, as it were, his own face from that Son, in whom he had been ever well pleased, when the latter became a substitute for sinners. Their desert he in a degree experienced.

"Go to the garden, sinner, see  
Those precious drops that flow;  
The heavy load he bore for thee,  
For thee, he lies so low."

But far from us be the presumption, that we do or can fully comprehend the mysteries of God manifest in the flesh, in any of his sorrows. In that he suffered for us, we will rejoice; "with his stripes we are healed," and for this we give praise.

## WHY WAS CHRIST CRUCIFIED ?

*It was not for any Crime actually committed by Him.*

His position on the cross, was, indeed, adapted to make the impression of extraordinary ill-desert in him. Death, in that manner, was a mark of the greatest infamy ; none other, being equal to it in ignominy and odiousness. It was the punishment of robbers and murderers, provided they were slaves ; but, if freemen, it was regarded as too disgraceful for them, however aggravated their guilt. Christ had neither directly nor indirectly violated the laws of the land ; nor had he encouraged, in any of those who listened to his instructions, a disregard to public authority. On the contrary, he counselled them to render unto magistrates the things that belong to them ; not less than to God the things which he claims for himself.

Jesus was, openly, accused of having designs against the Roman government, but, in view of all the evidence brought to substantiate the charge, Pilate, himself a high officer of that nation, and without partiality for Christ, said, "I find no fault in him."

The Saviour had not neglected the established religion of his country. He attended faithfully upon the annual festivals, and, on the Sabbath, united with the people in worship. In the estimation of all unprejudiced minds, he was pure from every defilement, and the uniform testimony of the Father was entirely in his favor. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Our Lord was not crucified to set an example of patience and fortitude under sufferings. Others, besides him, have left patterns worthy of imitation in this respect.

*He could have saved Himself.*

Nor did he die for want of means by which to extricate himself from the power of his enemies. Had he but requested angelic interference, more than "twelve legions" of the heavenly hosts would have instantly appeared for his rescue. Not a moment passed, from the time when he was seized till he bowed his head and gave up the ghost, in which he might not have delivered himself. By a mere word of his mouth, or a glance of the eye, he could have petrified every persecutor; he voluntarily surrendered himself to captors, accusers, and crucifiers. Therefore the question returns, why was he put to death? To answer this is the problem to be solved. Whither shall we look for the means of its solution? Not elsewhere than to the sacred volume; to that let us turn and search for the truth.

*He died to Redeem Man.*

We find, at a date extremely early, that redemption was promised to ruined man, and that sacrifices were appointed to prefigure Christ's death. The altars for burnt-offering, reared by the command of God, and continued by the same authority for thousands of years,—the immense number of beasts slain and consumed by fire, were all typical of the Redeemer, who was to come. The prophets, speaking as they were guided by the Eternal Spirit, portrayed the person, life and death, of a promised Saviour. Isaiah is so specific and full, that rejecters of Scripture infallibility, affirm, he must have written subsequently to the occurrence of the events described, and yet he lived centuries before the *advent* of the Messiah. His delineations accord, precisely, with the historical accounts of the New Testament. The writings of the evangelists and the

apostolic epistles, are perfectly harmonious, touching the design of Christ's death. With holy rapture one of the Saviour's penmen tells us—"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." John 3: 16, 17. In connection with this statement, in phraseology greatly diversified, is set forth the death of Christ, as *necessary* to human salvation. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Matt. 20: 28. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all." 1 Tim. 2: 5, 6. "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." Romans, 4: 25. "Christ died for our sins." 1 Cor. 15: 3. "Who gave himself for our sins." Gal. 1: 4. The same great truth is presented in still different language. Christ is said to bear the guilt of all men. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John, 1: 29. The word here rendered *taketh away*, means to take up and carry. "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Heb. 9: 28. "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins." 1 John, 3: 5. We read, that Christ was made a *propitiation*, by which term we are to understand a propitiatory sacrifice. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." Romans, 3: 25. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John, 2: 2. Yet another form of representation is, that Christ died to reconcile men to God, to restore them to divine favor. "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." Romans, 5: 10. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." 2 Cor. 5: 19. Inspiration adopts a diversified

mode of expression ; the sentiment, however, is one ; and the doctrine inculcated is, that Christ died to save mankind from the condemnation under which they lie, by reason of sin. No less explicit are the Scriptures, in regard to the actual effect of Christ's death on the moral relation of men to God. The human race is in a fallen state, and without help, except as sovereign grace provides it. Eternal death awaits every transgressor who has no merits but his own to present to his Maker.

*He satisfied Justice.*

By the death under consideration, the demands of justice were so far met, that God can "be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." In a qualified sense of the term, Christ is said to have been the substitute of the sinner. Man's sins he bore, in his own body, on the tree ; the sword raised to smite the guilty fell on him ; and now the former, by availing himself of the merits of the sufferer, may escape in this life, in a good degree, the consequences of his own depravity, and wholly in the future state.

*He paid our Debt.*

Christ is likewise represented as paying the debt of the sinner. Such language can be employed only in a restricted or a metaphorical sense. Perfect and perpetual obedience is due to the law of God, from every rational creature. Whenever an individual fails in the discharge of this duty, he becomes obnoxious to the penalty of the law ; in other words, is a debtor to it, and his obligations he can cancel in no other way, than by suffering. The smallest violation involves so much guilt, that the demand cannot be satisfied with less than eternal endurance. Christ, by dying, has so answered the



requirement of the broken law, that the transgressor may be delivered from condemnation by availing himself of the merits of that death.

*Sometimes it is said, that our Sins were imputed to Christ.*

In its literal acceptation, imputing is reckoning to one what actually belongs to him; hence, to impute sin, is to place at one's own account the sins of which he is guilty; and not to impute sin, is to regard one as not a sinner. "Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." Ps. 32 : 2. The sin of any man could not be *literally* imputed to Christ; yet the guilt of the entire world was so placed to his account, that he is said to have borne it in his own body, and to have died for it. This was the weight that oppressed him, and compelled him to exclaim, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." Matt. 26 : 39. On the cross, too, the same burden bowed him down, and extorted the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. 27 : 46.

What was accomplished by the death of Jesus, is denominated an *atonement*. Uniting all the Scripture representations respecting the intent of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and the actual effect of it on the moral state of man, we may express ourselves thus : *Justice is so satisfied, the demands of the law upon the sinner are so answered, the debt of the sinner is in such a sense paid, and all the requirements of God's moral government are so far met, that the sinner may secure pardon and eternal life.*

*Heaven is open to all Men.*

The atonement is general, not particular; universal, not limited; the family of man is embraced in its provisions; the

*charter* of redemption excludes none. It is easy to see on examination of the passages of revealed truth, in which are exhibited the nature and extent of God's merciful arrangements for the race, that they are truly comprehensive. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." Isaiah, 55 : 1. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11 : 28. This cardinal truth, that Christ died for the sins of *the world*, ought never to be concealed. Set it aside, and in no quarter can we find authority to affirm, that heaven is attainable by all ; some must, of necessity, be miserable for ever, if the atonement does not reach their case ; the antidote will appear less extensive than the evil for which it was provided. The first Adam's influence was wider than is that of the second. Such, however, is not the presentation made in the word of God. But while the animating truth, that Christ died for all, should be everywhere published and enforced, another important fact must not by any means be held back. It is the following : *The death of Christ does not, in itself alone, secure the salvation of any soul.* Did he then appear on an uncertain expedition ? Far otherwise is the fact. Before he left the glory, which he had enjoyed eternally with the Father, the guarantee was given, that he should see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied ; that an innumerable company, which no man can number, redeemed out of all nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, shall at last stand with him on the Zion above, "clothed with white robes and palms in their hands." It must be admitted that, thus far, the great majority of the race, reaching adult age, have perished ; but it is far from being improbable, that when all the arrangements of the mediatorial economy shall come to an end, that the number of the saved will almost infinitely exceed the catalogue of the lost. A sentiment advanced by some, that, because Christ died for all, none can fail of salvation, has no support in the Bible. Life eternal is offered us on certain

terms, which, in all cases, must be regarded. Those complying are saved, — rejecters are lost. Many refuse to comply, and therefore experience the woes of the second death.

“ Salvation, O salvation,  
The joyful sound proclaim;  
Till earth’s remotest nation  
Has learned Messiah’s name.”

Go, ye heralds of the cross, through all the continents and islands, proclaiming the wonderful truths of redemption. Publish the arousing fact, that Christ has atoned for sin; that heaven is accessible; but ever join with such announcement, others, equally true, important, and closely connected; *no salvation* without repentance for sin, and faith in the Redeemer. The celestial city is barred against the impenitent. Encouraging careless sinners to expect eternal life, simply because Christ has died, is perverting the gospel, and bringing upon the one who does it, the terrible anathema denounced against false teachers. Thanks to God, the rebellious among men may be forgiven; aliens may be brought near; the heirs of wrath devouring, enduring, can become candidates for the New Jerusalem; but tremble ye, who live in guilt, for condemnation will be aggravated in proportion to the richness of the grace slighted. The mountains of your transgressions, now rising fearfully high, may crush you for ever!

Perhaps the query is started, did not Christ suffer in vain as it respects some? If such interrogatory arise, it can be answered by saying, that whatever he underwent would have been necessary, had only one person needed forgiveness. The imperious demand for the atonement rests not in the *number* of sinners, but in the *nature* of sin. Again; every plan of God answers the precise end intended. He is honored by the scheme of redemption, whether few or many avail themselves of its benefits. The happiness, the glory, yea, all the

perfections of Jehovah, are so infinitely removed from the scenes and circumstances of earth, as not actually to suffer in consequence of any occurrences in time. It will be worse than in vain to all who refuse the purchased grace; for they must meet a more dreadful doom, after having slighted the Saviour, than they could if no mercy were provided.

I have thus endeavored to answer the inquiry, Why was Christ crucified? Who will not return thanks to God for the gift of a Saviour? Can any contemptuously treat the Lord's marvellous interposition for a world of sinners?

#### THE CRUCIFIXION SCENE.

“And they crucified him.” Isolated, these words simply announce a fact. Contemplated in the connection in which they stand on inspiration's page, they proclaim an event greater than was the birth of the world, or than will be its dissolution. The day, which witnessed *the crucifixion*, stands alone in the earth's calendar; for it, we may almost affirm, all others were made.

Crosses had been previously elevated as high as the one now erected — and many a condemned individual had expiated real or supposed guilt on *wood accursed* — but here was a cross, which, like the sun in the heavens, should attract the gaze of the nations. “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.” Thus did he predict of himself, whose mournful elevation we now contemplate.

Behold, the cross is lifted up and a king is suspended thereon. A wonderful being is occupying a remarkable position. The king of the Jews, yea, the ruler of the whole earth, is nailed to the cross. Is this by thy permission, O thou that inhabitest eternity? Then, may we not exclaim, “Clouds and darkness are round about thee.” Whom thou hast consecrated as king, man is murdering, as if he were the veriest scourge of human-

ity. "My kingdom is not of this world," solves, in part, the otherwise mysterious problem. He, whom they crucify, came to reign in righteousness, and not to rule according to ordinary procedure. To erect, on the ruins of sin, an empire of holiness, was his errand to earth. Jesus was a spiritual prince. Wherefore, then, should he be lifted up in this shameful manner? Can the history of any world afford a parallel? No, there is nothing like it. Singular are all the circumstances attending the crucifixion of this king. The holy city, on the night previous to the event, exhibited a strange mixture of occurrences. From all parts of Palestine the people have come up to attend a great national yearly festival. Some of the truly devout are breathing forth their most fervent prayers, for the coming of the long expected Shiloh, while others are rejoicing that he has already come; but the chief priests and the rulers are now actually engaged in the necessary preliminaries for the crucifixion of the same promised Deliverer. All night is heard the sound of footsteps; morning comes, and it echoes, throughout the streets and lanes, that a great and awful scene is soon to be witnessed on Calvary. The much sought Jesus is in the power of his persecutors, and stands at the bar of the Roman governor. Enraged Jews have succeeded in laying hands upon him, and are anxiously waiting to hear the death decision. When it is intimated by the judge, to whom they have committed the case, that the accused is innocent, with rending cries they demand that he should be crucified, and the voice of the king's enemies prevails — sentence is given according to their request. But insult must be added to insult. The meek and lowly Jesus is taken into the common hall, where a band of soldiers gather about him, rend his garments from him, attire him in a scarlet robe, place a crown of thorns on his head, a reed, as a mock sceptre, in his hand, and bow with feigned adoration before him, saying, "Hail, king of the Jews." The heart's blackest venom is cast into the face of the suffering prisoner.



At length the hour for execution arrives, and the great procession starts for the mount of crucifixion. The temple of God is reflecting, from its golden turrets, the rays of the morning sun. Siloa's brook is flowing softly, fast by the holy oracles. All nature seems quiet, as were the moments, forming a prelude to those mysterious phenomena, which caused the everlasting hills to shake. Vast numbers are pouring forth from every part of Jerusalem, with their faces towards Calvary. Men, women, and children, are hurrying onward, to witness or to bewail the great exhibition of the day. Various are the feelings, and dissimilar the thoughts, that exercise the hearts and the minds of the promiscuous throng. What, inquires one, is Jesus to be crucified? It was he, who restored to vigor my withered arm. He, says another, cured my disorder, which no physician could relieve. Had it not been for him, adds a third, I should never have arisen from the bed on which I had lain helpless for eight and thirty years. Yonder passes the man who never saw, till Jesus gave him sight. He weeps, that his kind benefactor is now to be ignominiously executed. There, too, is the widow, whose heart was made to overflow with joy, when, at the gate of Nain, the compassionate Redeemer touched the bier on which her only son was borne to the burial, and the young man was restored to his mother. Some are bewailing, but more are exulting. Thousands had heard Christ rebuke their wickedness, and now they rejoice in the prospect of being freed from his reproving accents. There run a group of youth, whose lips have learned nothing but impudence. Here is a company of little children, upon some of whose heads the hands of Christ had been laid in blessings; only a day or two since, many of them were singing hosannas to his name in the temple.

The prisoner and his attendants, leaving the hall of Pilate, pass through the street, significantly termed in later times, "Via Dolorosa." Jesus is compelled to bear his own cross, till

he faints under the weight. Touched with sympathy for the sufferer, many lament for him; but he, seeing greater cause for tears than his own condition, turns his eyes upon the melting multitude, and says, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children."

They arrive at the locality consecrated to public executions. Golgotha is the name applied to it, because of the many skulls of criminals there scattered. See that chasm in the rock, waiting to receive the cross of the Redeemer. Behold the spikes, which are to pierce the hands and the feet of the spotless Lamb of God. Savage soldiers remove from the victim his garments, and expose him not only to the contempt of infuriated men, but to the air and to the sun. Lo, he is fastened to the fatal wood and suspended between heaven and earth, as if worthy of neither. When on trial, a murderer had been preferred to him, and now he is placed between two thieves. He thirsts, and they give him to drink, vinegar, mingled with gall. Some, sitting down, watch him with fiendish looks. The malice, so long rankling in their bosoms, luxuriates in the agonies of its object. "Thou, that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself. — If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." Priests, with unsurpassed scorn, pour out their contempt in words like these; — "He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him, for he said, I am the Son of God." Alas! even his fellow-sufferers join in the bitter taunts. It is written, that "the thieves, also, who were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." We are informed, that somewhere, amid these acts of insult and torture, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them;" leaving an example to all who suffer for righteousness, to follow. "And they crucified him." Earth and hell pour their vengeance on the spotless Messiah.

Ah, if ever there were a jubilee throughout the realm of rebel angels, was it not when the Lord of glory was nailed to the cross? Their mighty foe — he, who by his omnipotence had driven them from the shining seats, forfeited by their apostasy, is struggling amid death's agonies.

What means this withdrawal of light, and this coming on of darkness? Suddenly the heavens are veiled in sackcloth, and nature is shrouded in midnight. Do not sad reflections arise in your minds, ye infuriated persecutors? In the midst of your dreadful transactions there is an awful interruption. Oh, that some artist, of surpassing skill, had been present to depict the approach, the continuance, and the termination of that direful shrouding in gloom, and to transmit his performance to after ages. Ye sceptics, to whom all deep things are equally without depth, unveil to us the mystery of a midnight at noon; of the heavens in mourning, and of the earth in agony.

Three hour's darkness triumphs. How did the thousands, forming concentric circles around the cross, occupy themselves during the dreary interval? Were there any tears of contrition then shed? Three hours of solid, awful darkness! Didst thou, great orb of day, who for thousands of years hadst not once failed to emit thy beams, lose the power of shining — or did thy rays return, affrighted, when they beheld their Maker disgraced and dying?

Light begins to reappear and Jesus cries with a loud voice, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, — My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And was it not enough that earth and hell should league together against the king of Zion? Must the Father conspire with them to inflict upon his own well-beloved Son, undeserved vengeance? Thou, O most High, didst permit and perform all this for the sake of accomplishing an end worthy of thy wisdom, and consistent with thine unbounded benevolence. We refer to thy part performed in this great drama, with no cavilling design, but to mark the

several ingredients, mingled in the Saviour's cup of woe. Various were the thoughts started by the lamentation just uttered by Jesus, but among them all there was none of compassion. "Let be; let us see whether Elias will come to save him." Soon, we hear again the voice of the sufferer, exclaiming, "It is finished," and, having declared this fact, "he bowed his head and gave up the ghost." Still, other amazing phenomena succeed; the veil of the temple is rent in twain from the top to the bottom; the earth quakes and the rocks are shattered. Do we behold witnesses of the crucifixion earthquake, when we see the myriads of rocky fragments, which overspread so many of our fields? These are monuments of mighty commotions in nature; they are proofs of revolutions among the flinty portions of the earth. Neither we, nor our fathers, have seen the mountain tottering, or the granite hills exploding; yet such events have occurred in all parts of this continent. May not the whole material of our globe have been moved, agitated, and terribly shaken, when Christ expired? Ought we not, when seeing these inanimate witnesses of some wonderful agitation in nature, to betake ourselves to the cross? "Graves were opened and many bodies of the saints, which slept, arose." They not only appeared alive, but actually went into the holy city and shewed themselves to the living there. Did not their coming forth from the repose of the grave, afford a proof that Christ, in dying, subdued death? Were they not early fruits of his power to restore all who have died or shall die? The spirit of Jesus has departed; his eye, so wont to pity the afflicted, and to weep with the sorrowful, is closed in death — but human malignity is not yet satisfied — a soldier boldly advances and thrusts a spear into the side of the breathless body.

What will be done with these sacred remains? Shall they be cast away, to become food for ravens and vultures? There is one who has witnessed the crucifixion, himself a counsellor —



a member of the Jewish court, who never had consented to the condemnation of Jesus; with true sympathy, and sincere piety, he goes to the authorities of the place, and craves *the body*. Having attired it in clean linen, he "laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of a rock," and secured it by rolling a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and thus terminates the scenes of the crucifixion. Who was benefited by the spectacle on that memorable occasion? Who, I mean, of those that were witnesses? A centurion was touched so as to testify in these emphatic words, "Truly this was the Son of God." Inspiration has added also another fact. "And all the people, that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts, and returned." Did they repent? Are some of them with Christ in heaven? The great fact, that Jesus was crucified, we know; for none other in history, is more fully substantiated—but at just what time in our year, the anniversary of that event comes around, who can tell? Heaven secures to us essential information yet mere curiosity fails of being gratified. Jews and Gentiles were united in the fearful tragedy. The former demanded the death of the Redeemer, the latter carried the demand into execution, and the prime mover of both, was Satan himself. Far back in the counsels of eternity, was the decree of Jehovah, that the Son, the second person in the Trinity, should, having become incarnate, be given up to all these buffetings. "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and, by wicked hands, have crucified and slain." Christ was the Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. We must deprecate the feelings, purposes, and deeds, of the crucifiers, or be justly charged with partaking of their guilt—yet, at the same time, we should adore the measureless goodness of the Almighty, in giving us his Son to die for sin. In view of what the Saviour suffered, our hearts should melt in pity and love. Considering the established fact, that our



salvation rests on the merits of Christ's death, we should render ceaseless praise for this great, essential sacrifice.

#### THE MEDIATORSHIP OF CHRIST.

##### *Its relation to Individuals.*

By mediator, we understand a third person, who interposes between two parties, for the adjustment of difficulties. The occasions are many, in human affairs, in which the services of such a person are needed. It is not uncommon for one nation to mediate between two others, and thus bring about an amicable settlement of an unhappy state of affairs, which otherwise might result in the effusion of blood. There is an absolute necessity for a mediator between God and man, because of the revolted condition into which the human race has fallen by sin. Perfect beings, however far removed from their Creator in the endowments of their natures, find ready access to their Sovereign. But he cannot look with approbation upon the guilty. His holy law must be maintained; and this can be done in only one of two ways; either the sinner must suffer the full penalty due to his transgressions, or a third party must interpose with such qualifications as shall bring about a reconciliation. It is evident, that for such an undertaking, peculiar requisites are demanded. Let us look at the parties in the case brought to view. God, the infinite, and man, a finite being, are at variance. A wide and awful breach has been made between the eternal Sovereign and the earthly subject. Who shall stand up and reconcile the immutable Creator and the alienated creature? Surely, he who has become an object of divine displeasure, cannot satisfy the law, by penitence or prayer, or any suffering which is short of eternal. Angels cannot heal this division — for should they

undertake the cause of the guilty, they would themselves become partakers of iniquity, and at once be expelled, as rebels, from their celestial abode. Jehovah himself cannot, in his appropriate character, as Governor of the universe, attempt the direct restoration of the sinner, without violating his own law, and laying himself open to the just complaints of all the holy in his kingdom. In order for the settlement of the difficulty, one must appear, who can unite in himself, the interests of both parties. How can this be done? Momentous inquiry! None but Omniscience is able to answer it, and let mortals rejoice in the provision, made in heaven. The plan formed, was to unite true divinity and real humanity, in one person. Such an arrangement was, undoubtedly, the only one that could be made; for, had a less sacrifice been adequate, than is implied in this, it would unquestionably have been preferred; and to obtain a Mediator of more exalted qualifications than he possesses, who is thus provided, were impossible. We are bound to conclude, that what God does, is not only right, but the best conceivable. In Scripture terms, this Mediator is the man Christ Jesus. "There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." He was early promised to come as the great Deliverer of the race. To him the types of the ancient dispensation all pointed. He answers, in every particular, the delineations given by the ancient prophets of him who should appear, in an age subsequent to their own, as the Messiah. The union of supreme divinity and of real humanity, qualified him to enter on the wonderful work. By his spotless life he magnified the law and made it honorable; and by his death on Calvary, where he suffered as the atoning Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, he freely endured the penalty due to man, and thus brought the entire race into a salvable condition. The sacrifice of himself upon the cross, was infinite in its merits,

because he united with his human, the divine nature. Short were his agonies, but the dignity of the sufferer rendered them, in the eye of justice, equal in merit to the eternal punishment of the whole human race. "On him was laid the iniquity of us all." He died and was entombed; but the bonds of death could not long hold him; he arose from the rock-hewn sepulchre, and, after a brief sojourn on earth, ascended to heaven, and sat down "at the right hand of God, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us." None can approach the Father, except through him, nor can benefits be conferred upon sinners save on account of what the Mediator has done for them. It was by him, as *promised*, that the saints of the first dispensation had access to God. He is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." To him are Christians indebted for their present happiness, and for their hope of eternal bliss. By him sinners must be saved or perish. Jesus can roll off the mountains of guilt which oppress the penitent's soul; he can remove the deep stains of sin, and prepare the humble for spotless purity. There is no darkness, which his beams cannot dissipate, and no insensibility which shall not yield, when he commissions the Spirit to overcome it.

*Its Kingly Character.*

In the Scriptures, a kingly character is often ascribed to Christ. Speaking of him, Jehovah says, "I have set my King upon my holy of Zion." After describing the humiliation of the Lord Jesus, in his state on earth, an inspired writer adds: "Wherefore, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name. That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Phil. 2: 9—11. Furthermore, it is affirmed

by the same authority, that God hath set the Mediator "at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Eph. 1: 20 — 22. Again, we find it asserted of this same Being, that "he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." 1 Cor. 15: 25. A most excellent compend of biblical teachings, concerning this point, says: "Christ executeth the office of a king, in subduing us to himself; in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies."

What is the *nature* of that universal subjugation, which Immanuel is to effect? Complete it will be; but how will intelligent creatures, belonging to the order of sinners, stand related to him when the last foe shall have been made to submit? Some, in fellowship far more with sin, than holiness, would fain look forward to a period when blessedness shall be their inheritance. Does the fact affirmed by infallibility, that Christ will subdue all things unto himself, authorize the idea, that subsequently to the event named, there will be no suffering in the universe? Is happiness a necessary consequent upon subjugation? When the eternal Son, "grasping in his right hand ten thousand thunders," conquered the rebellious angels, binding them in chains of fire, did they become at once and forever, blissful? Our first parents lifted their hands against their Maker, and thus lost communion with him. They were excluded from Eden — but what were the fruits to them of this divine expulsion? Expelled they were, and driven away, not into bliss, but out of it. Jehovah subdued the sinning world, when its wickedness had become exceedingly great. He bowed, also, before his own awful uprising, the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, and her sister cities, yet none whom the deluge destroyed, or who were swept away by fire



from heaven, found happiness, as the consequent of subduing power brought to bear upon them. They did indeed submit, for resistance to Omnipotence was of no avail. It becomes us carefully to discriminate between a surrender, which is entirely free, and that which results from superior force. Some, once arrayed against Christ, submit voluntarily. The number of mankind that have already taken this course is large, but as future years shall glide, the relative proportion of this class, in the race, will doubtless be greatly increased. Moved by the Word and the Spirit of the Lord, these make a cheerful and perpetual surrender of themselves to the King of Zion. Multitudes there have been in past ages, and at the present time myriads exist, not enrolled among the willing followers of Jesus. "It is not charity, but inattention to the terms of salvation, as they are revealed in the Scriptures, which leads men to think favorably of the spiritual state of the world in general." If the Judge should now appear, for the raising of the dead and for the allotting of the retributions of eternity, he would doubtless find millions more of enemies than of friends, both among the dead and among the living. Be the time of his second advent when it may, those who have died his opposers, will be found foes at his final coming, and such they must remain forever.

Inspiration is sufficiently explicit, touching the nature of that profound and complete subjugation which the Lord Jesus will effect. Millions must experience in themselves the punishment "which the justice of God has prepared for the rejecters of his grace." Jehovah, addressing the Messiah, with reference to the unyielding subjects of his empire, says: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Again; "Sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." We are assured that he will reign "till he hath put all enemies under his feet." This latter mode of expression indicates the



most abject degree of subjection — a complete state of prostration, by extraneous force. Anciently, conquerors were accustomed to place their feet upon the necks of their captives, to indicate a total prostration of the conquered. For instance, Joshua, having taken five opposing princes, brought them before the people of Israel, and said to the men of war, who had attended him; “Come near, put your feet upon the neck of them; fear not, nor be dismayed; be strong and of good courage, for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies, against whom ye fight.” After this exhibition, the five royal prisoners were slain and hung upon as many trees. Oh, how deceived are they, who suspend a hope of heaven on the assurance that Christ will subdue all men to himself. Promises of good to the humble are not clothed in words of terror. The willing subjects of the mediatorial reign are not put beneath the feet of their King; they are permitted to sit with him on his throne of glory. Better will it be for any man to be cast alive into a burning crater, than to be made the footstool of the Redeemer! For those once there, no escape can be discovered. All, thus trampled down, shall be bound in everlasting chains of unquenchable fire.

That Christ will subdue all persons and things to himself is certain, for (1,) he was elevated to the heavenly seat, in order to accomplish that end. The whole tenor of the Scriptures, in regard to this point, shows that the Son left heaven and passed through a variety of scenes on earth, from the manger to the cross, and thence to the mediatorial throne, for the purpose of bringing this revolted world into subordination to the divine government. (2.) He has the requisite power, authority, and wisdom, for effecting this purpose. To him are surrendered, by the Father, the treasures of the world above, and of the earth. Creatures every where are made, by a decree, subject to his bidding; and in some way he can cause them to subserve the ends of his administration. By an absolute

edict, good men and bad men, holy angels and evil angels, are rendered subject to his power. If he speak, they must listen; when he commands, none can, with impunity, refuse obedience; his word is law, and his authority allows no safe resistance. (3.) Christ is determined to obtain complete victory over every foe. His reign is not inglorious; it is not slothful; in no respect is it inefficient. "Never was a warfare so desperate, as that which sinners maintain against the laws and empire of Christ." Mortal energies are nothing before him; human expedients, to resist his sway, he will not allow to retard, in the least, his progress from conquest to conquest. That arm, extended to save the humble, will be lifted in wrath against the obstinate. "But those, mine enemies, that would not that I should reign over them, bring them hither and slay them before me." Prior to the Redeemer's first advent, a prophet had said, "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied," and, from the time of his exaltation to the present, he has been intent upon fulfilling this prediction to the widest extent of its import. What, though "the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." Continually, the Son of God is rolling onward his victorious car. The nations are now trembling at his presence. Prophecy shows us the world prostrated at his feet, and the earth filled with the lustre of his name and the monuments of his victories; he is exhibited, as reigning in undisturbed peace, for a thousand years. Whether, however, they be literal or prophetic years, is a question to which divers answers have been given. That there is to be a long period of blessedness, in time, under the government of Jesus, no believer in revelation will deny.

But it will be followed by new manifestations of hostility from Satan and his legions; who, though long held in chains, and though prohibited from going forth, were not entirely divested of their power, and not at all of their malice. At the expiration of the millennial era, fallen angels are to be allowed to exercise their energies for a while; yet, for what length of time, we are not informed. It is termed "a little season." Rev. 20: 3. Short, doubtless, it will be, in comparison with the illustrious period which immediately preceded it. Onward shall roll the car of time, whether sin or holiness be in the ascendant. Christ's conquest will be complete, when the general judgment shall have occurred, and this event stands in close connection with the general resurrection of all the dead.

"No more shall atheists mock his long delay;  
His vengeance sleeps no more—behold the day."

The countless myriads of the slumberers shall be raised; the living all be changed, and the human family be summoned into the presence of the Mediator, seated on a tribunal for judicial transactions. Mankind, on that august occasion, will appear in the characters which they possessed at the time when they left the world. By the righteous, that scene will be hailed with joy. The wicked have nothing except eternal wrath to expect, and they would gladly escape the scrutiny of *that day*. They will appear with the mark of their rebellion on them, and still cherishing their long indulged hostility to the Son of God. While all who submitted to Christ in time, will joyfully bow the knee to Immanuel; his enemies shall perform the same act, by the mere force of Omnipotence, and be made to acknowledge the unrighteousness of their career in sin. Power to harm the saints, or to pollute what is holy, shall be taken away, but there will be no place or disposition for availing repentance. They and the devils are to be eternal monuments of divine wrath, and compelled to extol the

power, which prevented their harming heaven and confined them in hell.

*Its Termination.*

What will become of the Mediatorship of Christ, after the righteous shall all have been welcomed into the kingdom prepared for them, and the wicked shall have been driven away into that world created for the devil and his angels? The Scriptures are not destitute of allusion to this subject. Indeed, they seem to speak with a good degree of explicitness in respect to it, though what they affirm is contained in a very brief compass: "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." 1 Cor. 15: 24.

The chapter containing this passage is chiefly devoted to a discussion, respecting the doctrine of the resurrection of believers; and this verse, with the four following, are brought forward in a manner rather parenthetical.

Having, by arguments clear and conclusive, proved the doctrine, the apostle alludes to the *time* of the resurrection, which shall take place when Christ appears the second time. He adds, "then cometh the *τελος*, end." But what does the holy penman mean by this last term? Some understand him to speak of the *end of the resurrection*. "Christ, the first fruits, afterward, they that are Christ's, at his coming"—then the closing part of the work of restoring the slumberers in the earth; i. e. the wicked are raised. But does not such an interpretation seem unnatural? By *end* is more generally understood, the termination of the present economy, the close of probation, and the burning of the world; and the latter, I suppose to be the true import of the word in the verse under consideration. By kingdom, βασιλειαν, interpreters more generally think, is meant the *mediatorial kingdom* of Christ.



This he received of the Father as the reward of sufferings, endured for man, and as a display of that wonderful benevolence toward the ruined race of human beings, which is revealed in the gospel, and its government the Redeemer now administers, being enthroned at the right hand of God. Others regard the kingdom, as that dominion "which the enemies of God and his people have usurped and which Christ shall eventually restore, or reëstablish, to the Father, by putting down all opposition to his supreme dominion." The verb παραδῶ, preceding βασιλειαν, I should construe in the present tense, as it evidently may be; then cometh, or then is the end, when he *delivers* up the kingdom. The pronoun, *he*, is not in the original, but it is naturally supplied from the twenty-third verse, and manifestly refers to Christ as antecedent. The word καταργησῃ translated, *shall have put down*, signifies, to render inactive, to spoil, to cause to cease, to do away, to put an end to, to destroy, etc. Furthermore, *the rule*, authority, and power, mentioned in the passage, include every kind of opposition to holiness, whether it be human or Satanic; whether it exist in the form of religion, or of infidelity, or of atheism; whether it be on earth, or in hell. Christ has undertaken to subdue all opposition.

With the above preliminaries respecting particular words, let us pass to an examination of two expositions, which are given to the verse before us. I am not aware that more than two have ever been adopted by expounders of authority. A hundred new ones may, however, have appeared, within a brief period. Ours is an age prolific in strange opinions of the Scriptures. Swarms of biblical writers are manifesting a wisdom above what is revealed. First; at the end of the world, and subsequent to the general resurrection and final judgment, Christ will resign his mediatorial office and vacate the throne on which he sits as Mediator, that the universe, ever after, may be under the direct and immediate control of the God-



head, as it was prior to the establishment of the divine mediatorship. The human nature of Christ will not cease to exist, but his present office will be terminated, at the close of the scenes attending those august events. This interpretation may be set forth in the language of the writers who have adopted it and given their reasons. Doddridge paraphrases the passage above quoted, thus: "And then shall the end of the world be, the grand catastrophe of all those wonderful scenes that have held in suspense so many succeeding generations, when he shall publicly and solemnly deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to God, even the Father, by whose commission he has held it, and to whose glory he has administered it." \* The following is the language of Dr. T. Scott: "The solemnities of the final judgment being concluded, Christ will deliver up the mediatorial kingdom to God, even to the Father, from whom he received it, having previously put down all rule and all authority, and power." He farther remarks, that "the distinction between the absolute, universal, and everlasting kingdom of God, the governor of all, and the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, as instituted for the benefit of fallen man, is every where implied in the Scriptures. After the judgment, this kingdom will be terminated. Christ will, in human nature, retain peculiar authority over his redeemed people, and, as one with the Father, he will, with him and the Holy Spirit, reign, one God over all, blessed forevermore." † Perhaps the opinions of no other uninspired man are entitled to more weight, on the general drift of Scripture, than are his whose words I have just repeated. Whitby, as quoted by the writer last named, observes, that the exercise of his mediatorial authority Christ "shall then lay down, when all things are subdued to him;" and that no other kingdom or dominion will be "exercised in the celestial state, but what is essential to

\* Family Expositor.

† See his Commentary.

the whole Godhead." Macknight, in his Notes on the Epistles, presents essentially the same idea as the preceding: "Christ will deliver up the mediatorial kingdom, after the judgment." Some one, in the Cottage Bible, comments in this manner on the passage we are reviewing: "The mediatorial kingdom — an allusion to the care of Roman viceroys or governors of provinces, who, when their administration was ended, delivered up their government into the hand of the emperor." Dr. Appleton, in a discourse on the universal reign of Christ, when speaking with special reference to the mediatorship, says, that "the administration of this kingdom will continue in the hands of Christ, until the great designs of infinite wisdom are accomplished, at which time it will revert back to its original source, even to God the Father;" and these *designs* he supposes will be accomplished at the close of the present economy; that is, when the general judgment shall have taken place. The opinion of Dr. Knapp is in these words: "It appears, that the government which Christ, as a man, administers in heaven, will continue only while the present constitution of the world lasts."\* Selections from the writings of other distinguished theologians, who agree in sentiment with these, might be adduced, — but enough has been advanced to show what is the first interpretation. The twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth verses of the same chapter seem to corroborate the correctness of the foregoing exegesis: "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. And, when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Here, it appears, that a particular end is to be obtained by the mediatorship of Christ, which, having been secured, the office itself is to be annihilated.

The *second* exposition also regards *τελος*, "the end," as

---

\* Theol. Vol. II., p. 216.

the close of the present order of things. But it does not consider by βασιλειαν, "kingdom," to be meant the mediatorial. "The kingdom spoken of is the dominion which the enemies of God and his people have usurped, and which Christ shall eventually restore or reëstablish to the Father, by putting down all opposition to his supreme dominion." In support of this interpretation, its advocates argue, that though the mediatorial kingdom be *delegated*, it is not necessarily *limited*, and that as Mediator, Christ "*may* ever live and reign the glorious medium of blessings to his people; the unceasing object of their love and worship, to the eternal glory of God the Father." That the Lord Jesus *will* not cease to reign as Mediator, is thought to be shown by many passages of Scripture. God's promise to David, that his throne should be established forever, is cited in proof. See 2 Sam. 7 : 16. We find also that the Lord, by his prophets, predicting the coming of the Messiah, declares that the kingdom to be established shall never be destroyed. "His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." Dan. 7 : 14. Moreover, the angel Gabriel, foretelling the birth of the Saviour, says, "Of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke, 1 : 33. Furthermore, to the Lamb is ascribed everlasting honor in various parts of the last book in the Bible. "To him be glory and dominion forever and ever." Rev. 1 : 6. "Blessing and honor, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." Rev. 5 : 13. Here the Mediator and the Father are associated in the reception of praise. It is definitely said that Christ shall reign forever, as in the following quotation : "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." Rev. 11 : 15. Such are some portions of the strong scriptural testimony urged in support of the second interpretation of 1 Cor. 15 : 24. If to this

view, it be objected that the twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth verses of the same chapter are clearly opposed to it; its advocates would, perhaps, reply, that the declaration, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet," does not necessarily imply that he will then cease to exercise kingly authority, for this text teaches simply that Christ will certainly reign unto the period in which all his foes are made his footstool; therefore, none need think otherwise. The word, *till*, evidently does not, of itself, always limit time. Jehovah says to his ancient people, "Surely, this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die." Isa. 22: 14. Now we are not to infer that when those transgressors should leave the earth, their sin would depart from them. Again; to the objection, that in the twenty-eighth verse it says, "And when all things are subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all," it is rejoined that this language implies no greater subjection in the Son than is true of him as Mediator; it only asserts that there will be, subsequently to the general judgment, the same or a similar subordination of Christ to the Father, which characterizes the mediatorial reign.\*

Perhaps it is perfectly presumptuous for the writer to offer a word in respect to the expositions here brought to view. What does he know of that endless period subsequent to the last judgment? Yet, a few suggestions strike him as not unworthy a place in these pages. They will harm no one. In regard, then, to those interpretations which have been set before my readers, the first has the preference in my own mind, for the following, among other reasons. (1.) It is the more obvious one. The common student of the Scriptures would be likely to adopt it. God gave the Bible for precisely this class. He never intended his revelation should be a sealed book to those who meekly consult its leaves, and fervently pray to be led

---

\* See Biblical Repository for Oct., 1839, pages 439 — 449.



into the truth. (2.) This exposition is the one ordinarily given by judicious commentators on the Scriptures.. The other savors a little too much of speculation. Many are the discoveries professedly, of late years, in religion, and of course new forms of exegesis are given to the volume that contains our holy faith. Old opinions are discarded, as unfit for these latter days. The writer, however, is not at all ashamed to express far more confidence in the opinions of pious men who studied the Bible fifty or a hundred years since, than in any of the modern destroyers of established doctrines. (3.) It is evident that the mediatorial dispensation is peculiar; that it was instituted for a specific purpose; and when this shall be accomplished, the office itself will doubtless be terminated. The belief that it will close at the end of the present economy, is truly plausible. All the redeemed will then have been gathered into heaven. Why should not the Lord's elect, from every part of his universe, be admitted into the same relation to Jehovah? A mediation will no longer be needed when the ransomed are all welcomed to their Father's house. (4.) That construction, which must be given to the twenty-fifth and twenty-eighth verses of the fifteenth chapter of 1 Cor., in order to sustain the second exposition, appears to be forced, and, of course, unauthorized. Besides, those texts which are thought specially to favor the latter of the two views, may be explained naturally according to the first. "The delivering up of the kingdom will not put an end to it, but eternally establish it in a new and more glorious form. Christ shall not cease to reign, though the mode of his administration be different; though his mediatorial kingdom shall cease, the effects of it will remain forever." Comforting is the thought that whatever shall be the precise condition of the mediatorship of Christ after the general judgment, it will be perfectly satisfactory to himself; also to his people, and such as eternally to reflect the highest glory on the Godhead.



## THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

Speculation is now exceedingly rife, upon the doctrine of Christ's second coming. Daily, some persons are directing their eyes toward the heavens in expectation of his speedy appearing. Another class, though not quite as sure that his advent is at hand, despair of seeing the world improve morally, till he actually commences a personal reign upon the earth. It is not my design to examine any of the many theories connected with this general subject; but simply to comment upon one passage of Scripture used in support of the sentiment, that the Redeemer is yet to live among men. It occurs in Rev. 20 : 4, "And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Two questions are naturally suggested by these words. Who are the persons here named? What is meant by their living and reigning with Christ?

1. The persons. Who they are, may be learned from the very verse in which their living and reigning are mentioned. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands." Two classes of individuals appear to be here specified; though the evidence that such is the fact, seems less clear in our translation, than it does in the original. That the martyrs for Christ are pointed out is obvious, for they are those "beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God." The phrase "and which had not worshipped the beast," would more correctly exhibit the original, were the term *ὁτινες*, translated which, rendered whosoever, and thus the two classes named in the original, would be made visible in the rendering. One of these is composed of the martyrs, and the

other, of those who had stood firm in the service of God, but who had not been called to seal their faith with their blood. In the latter class *may* be included all the devoted servants of the Most High, from the actual origin of the human family, down to the period intended, for none of these have worshipped the beast or borne his image. It is not affirmed that no interpretation less comprehensive can be true; but the term itself admits of a use, equally unlimited. Two classes of believers are doubtless designated, and not the martyrs simply, as, if I mistake not, has sometimes been intimated.

2. Their living and reigning. Some interpreters think that the persons specified, are to be literally raised from the dead, at the commencement of the period termed "the millennium." A part of those who thus hold, maintain, that *the raised* are to dwell with Christ in heaven; and others suppose he will descend, and live with them on the earth, or at least not far removed from it, in the aerial regions. But what intimation is there in connection with the passage, that the Redeemer will sojourn again, for any length of time on this globe, or nearer to it, than he now dwells? Does such an idea find support at all, in the sublime representations of the holy seer? Is there the least shadow of such a sentiment stated by him? True, the reign of Christ for a thousand years, is to exhibit certain characteristics which it had not previously, and would not subsequently, to the specific period. The entire world shall yield him homage; his truth will be triumphant, and his name be known and adored by the nations; so generally shall his praise be sung, that the exceptions will be few.

Why is a literal resurrection of the bodies of martyrs and others argued from what the apostle says? Nothing is directly stated concerning *bodies*, "I saw the souls," etc. And where? In heaven, the place to which the spirit of the saint goes directly, on leaving its clayey tabernacle. What is that logic worth, which jumps to the conclusion, that the saints of a cer-

tain class, if not of all classes, will be raised as to their bodies, because John, in vision, saw their souls in heaven? Perhaps, however, the belief that there will be a literal resurrection at the opening of the millennium, is not based on what was seen by the apostle in heaven, but on the declarations of the sacred writer, in verses following the one in which he speaks of seeing the souls. "But the rest of the dead lived not again, till the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." Does not this imply, that the rest of the dead will live again, when the thousand years have expired, that is, immediately on its termination? Yet, does not the statement appear in close connection with the passage under consideration, that there will be a period of some length, subsequent to the millennium, prior to the general resurrection? If we claim that the first resurrection is literal, then why not admit that the second is literally to occur, when the millennium closes? This conclusion is however precluded. The entire theory of a first literal resurrection, is perhaps based on the use of the term *αναστασις*, with its qualifying epithet *Πρωτη*, translated first resurrection. But what is the *usus loquendi* of this word? In the Septuagint, *αναστασις* is used in Lam. 3 : 62, to denote a rising up, as contrasted with a sitting down. (See Eng. Bible, ver. 63.) It occurs also in Zephaniah, 3 : 8, and expresses the rising up of the Lord—"until the day that I rise up to the prey." It was said of the infant Jesus, "This child is set for the falling and rising up, *αναστασιν*, of many in Israel. *Πρωτη* often denotes rank, dignity. There is no objection to taking it in its primary import. This resurrection is first in respect to another; but it is not necessary, that both be precisely of the same nature, in order that one be first and the other last. The first and second death differ in their natures. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such, the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and reign with him

a thousand years." Nothing appears here, compelling us to adopt the idea of a literal resurrection, unless it be the term resurrection itself; but we have seen that this is employed in a different manner elsewhere. Does not the passage just quoted, when carefully examined, discountenance the literal construction? The raised reign a thousand years, and by implication then cease. Now if the martyrs and saints are raised literally to reign with Christ, is it not intimated, that when they cease to reign, they return to the condition in which they were previous to their reigning? If, then, they were literally raised in order to reign, will they not literally return to their former state, when they cease to reign? But how can a body, glorified for a thousand years, become again the occupant of a grave? It will not answer for us to interpret one part of a verse literally, and another part figuratively, because our own preconceived notions are best sustained by dealing with the holy oracles in this way. Truth should be the aim of our inquiries.

What seems to the writer the true and only authorized exposition of the passage, wholly rejects the idea of a literal resurrection of any of the dead, either at the commencement, or during the continuance of the millennium; nor does it admit the doctrine of a personal reign of the Messiah among men. Jesus is to appear in a visible form but once more, within sight of our globe, and that event will occur at the close of the present economy, when all the merciful designs of infinite Wisdom concerning the earth are completed. Martyrs and other eminent Christians will live and reign with Christ, in the great joy which their happy spirits shall experience *in heaven*, as they behold their Lord swaying his sceptre over every nation, having subdued the kingdoms unto himself. They will likewise reign with him on earth during the illustrious period designated by the term, a thousand years, according to the sense in which Elijah dwelt here in the days of the fore-



runner of Jesus. It had been predicted, that this prophet would come before the Lord, and so he did, as Christ himself affirmed, and yet it was only in spirit and power: "But I say unto you, that Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but they have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Then the disciples understood, that he spake unto them of John the Baptist." Matt. 17 : 12, 13. Of the pious who depart previous to the arrival of the new and illustrious era in Zion, when all shall know the Lord, it is also foretold that they will then live again in the lives of their successors. Their example shall be copied by the myriads and millions, who will people this planet during that wonderful and predicted period. Christian and martyr will be precious terms, and the memory of those who have shone as lights in the church of earlier generations, be sweetly embalmed in numberless hearts. Perhaps, too, all who have been eminent for holiness and activity, will be employed by the King of Zion as his special agents, going forth on errands of love, visiting, though invisibly, the habitations of men. Why may there not be as much blessedness in such a spiritual resurrection as can be in one more literal, or rather I should say, physical, for I suppose a literal rendering requires that we understand a spiritual resurrection? If this must be styled a figurative interpretation, then surely it accords more nearly with almost the entire book, in which the passage expounded occurs, than would one which might be named literal. Especially does it harmonize with the context in which the passage is found. The twentieth chapter of Rev. taken as a whole, seems to be utterly opposed to what some are pleased to call a literal exposition. "But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished." Now, "the rest of the dead" are either exclusively, or in part, the wicked; and to revert once more to what has been previously advanced, does not the language imply, that they will live, so soon as the thousand years are terminated? yet there



will be no literal resurrection for some time, perhaps for hundreds of years. The ungodly, however, will again live in the lives of wicked men. There may also be a race of inferior Christians, in whom the spirit of the martyrs seems not to dwell. Finally, the Scriptures present the raising of the dead as a single grand event ; the departed of all ages and of every period in the world's history, shall stand at once before God, and be judged.

## BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD.

Jehovah pitied ruined man, but mere pity could not pardon. The law had been broken, and it must quench its flaming sword in the blood of the sinner, or in that of a substitute. Sacrifices were early instituted ; they, however, could only point to something future — prefigure Christ.

“Not all the blood of beasts  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or take away the stain.”

Heathen altars smoke in vain ; pagans may as well leave their flocks and herds to roam in the fields as to give them in sacrifice ; their priests are appointed to no purpose. After rivers of blood have been shed, sins are still unpardoned. The Lamb of God *must* bleed. Without the shedding of *his* blood, there was no remission. Christ came to be an offering for sin, to die on the cross, by the hands of men more fierce than lions and more cruel than tigers. On thy summit, Calvary, was paid the price of man's redemption. Thou wast the altar on which the Lord's victim was sacrificed for the sins of the whole world.

Were repentance sufficient to secure pardon, would Jesus have died ? Does Jehovah make unreasonable demands ? *He did require* the sacrifice of Christ. Listen to the preaching of

the Saviour's harbinger. What did he teach respecting the efficacy of repentance? Did he point the weeping sinner direct to heaven, saying, your tears are enough to secure an inheritance there?—nothing more is necessary—God demands nothing more. Was this the course of John? Verily it was not. He said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Weeping cannot save men from hell. Far from it; penitence does not purchase forgiveness. For many thousands of years, altars had pointed to the tragic scenes on Calvary, as destined in the councils of eternity to take place. "In support of the doctrine of the atonement there is more authority than for any other revealed in the Scriptures. It was taught in the beginning of the patriarchal dispensation, in the words of *the promise*, and in the institution of sacrifices. It is enforced by the uniform, concurrent testimony of the types, prophecies, opinions, customs, and traditions of the Jewish Church."

Whence then the origin of the doctrine that repentance alone secures pardon? The Old Testament does not teach it, and the New begins by directing us to the Lamb of God; as it opens, so it continues even to the end. Jesus Christ and him crucified constitute the gospel. Take away the atonement, and nothing remains on which a sinner can base a reasonable hope of acceptance with God. "It is the peculiar foundation and principal doctrine of the Christian church in all ages." That then must be an anti-christian church which rejects the atonement. No wonder need be excited if its members show affinities for every species of error now burdening the earth.

"Come to Calvary's holy mountain,  
Sinners, ruined by the fall;  
Here a pure and healing fountain  
Flows to you, to me, to all."

What virtue does thy blood possess, O Immanuel! It can cleanse a world of sinners. Thou Lamb of God, give us a

sense of our perishing need of thee. Help us, weary and heavy laden, to hasten for the obtaining of thine Almighty aid.

The Father sent the Son, but equally true is it, that the latter came of his own free will. When the sacred Three consulted in reference to man's redemption, when it was asked who shall go as Redeemer, the Son, the second person in the Trinity, offered himself. Behold, then, this same Being veiled in flesh. He has come to make himself an offering for sin, he has left the bosom of the Father and the glory of heaven, because his heart overflowed with pity for man. Amazing love! how great the condescension! From the throne of the universe, he comes down to earth! No tongue can tell, no pen describe, the emotions of love which the Saviour felt.

“He saw our race in ruin lie,  
And pity brought him down.”

In leaving heaven, he left honor; the hosts above bowed to him and delighted to reverence him as their King, and were swift to do his will. He came on no errand of ambition —

“Nothing brought him from above,  
Nothing but redeeming love.”

Sinner, behold the Lamb of God. To-day, he invites you to look unto him. Listen to his alluring language. I am the only begotten of the Father — I descended from the celestial abode — leaving the glory which was eternally mine — and condescended to endure poverty, pain, reproach, and death for you. Hear my proclamations of love and mercy. See in me the greatest pledge of the Father's tender regard. Yon flaming sword demanded your blood, but I am come to give it mine. I am the promised Messiah. To me the types and shadows of ancient times all referred. Abraham and Jacob, Moses and David, Isaiah and Daniel, and all the prophets of the Lord expected my coming; and, at the appointed season

I appeared on the earth. For you I wept and prayed, and suffered and bled. Behold me as the only refuge for the soul; I can save and I destroy. Sinner, can you slight these calls from Christ? Can you treat with neglect his unbounded kindness?

#### THE HOLY SPIRIT.

For correct views respecting the Holy Spirit, we must consult the divine records. No other source of information has ever been placed within our reach. What they contain, may be classed under two heads; the *personality* and *operations* of the Spirit.

##### *The Personality of the Spirit.*

By a person is meant an individual; and by asserting the personality of the Holy Spirit, is set forth the fact, that the Spirit is not a mere *influence*, as some affirm, but as really an agent, as is the Father, or the Son. Proof of his personality, must be proof of his supreme divinity, as will appear in the discussion.

Christ, as he was leaving the earth to ascend the throne of mediation in heaven, instituted what is termed *Christian* baptism. It was to be a perpetual ordinance in his Church. He directed that the rite be invariably performed, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Matt. 28 : 19. The latter of these terms is entirely synonymous with *Holy Spirit*.

If, now, the personality of the last of the three mentioned be denied, then individuals are baptized in the name of two *persons* and of one *influence*; or, if we reject the divinity of Christ, they are baptized in the name of God, of a creature, and of an influence. Does this appear to be the fact? Should we naturally adopt such views of the passage? Does not the Redeemer, in these words, clearly teach that the Father, Son,

and Holy Ghost, are distinct persons ? The Spirit is here "associated in such a manner with two real and divine persons, as would render the connection unaccountable, if a real person were not understood in the third, as well as in the two former instances." This direction of the great Teacher, is seemingly decisive on the point of the Spirit's personality. It has but one obvious interpretation, and wherefore should its plain terms be forced into another signification ? Was it not intended to proclaim to the world the triune nature of the Godhead ? But there are many other texts bearing on this subject. Our Lord on the evening previous to his crucifixion said :

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." John, 14 : 16. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." 14 : 26. "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." 15 : 26. In these verses, "the Spirit is evidently spoken of as a distinct person from Christ. *He* is one Comforter, and the *Spirit*, who, after his departure, should come from the Father, is another." An able writer observes, that one of the titles of the Messiah among the Jews was, that of Comforter.

God the Father, *officially* stands at the head of the work of redemption ; the Son and the Spirit are, *officially*, inferior to him ; just as an ambassador to a foreign court is officially inferior to the prince or president sending him forth, though, in many respects, they may be equals. The Father sent the Son, who, having performed his mission, returned to heaven ; the Spirit came to remain and carry forward the enterprise of human salvation. The latter is, *officially*, subject to both the former ; *they* order him forth to prosecute the measures demand-



ed and secured by the atonement. In this sense he proceeds from both the Father and the Son, and not as *originating* from them. He comes as an *Agent*, with attributes for the performance of various services, among which are the imparting of consolations to Christians, abiding with them, convicting the impenitent, and making some of them new creatures in Christ. Distinct personality is implied in the commission borne by the Spirit. The duties assigned him are such as belong to a *personal agent*.

Instances in which the Spirit is exhibited as an influence are perfectly consistent with his personality ; but it is not consistent to represent the Spirit as a person, if there be nothing but an influence. A person can exert an influence, but a mere influence cannot be a person.

The personal pronouns in the above quotations are applied to the Spirit of God, in such a manner as cannot be accounted for, except upon the obvious supposition of the intention of our Saviour to represent the Spirit of God, under the character of a person.

We find, in 2 Cor. 13 : 14, these words : “ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.” Is not the Lord Jesus Christ a person ? Is not God a person ? The fact in each case is unquestionable. By what laws of language shall we deny the personality of the Spirit ? Established rules of *interpretation* should be as rigidly observed as are those of mathematical calculations, in order that we may arrive at correct results in our investigation of truth.

Another, but not less forcible argument for the personality of the Spirit, is derived from Matt. 12 : 31, 32. “ Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men ; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him ; but

whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Evidently, "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is represented as distinct from all other kinds of blasphemy." These words teach, "that men may blaspheme the Father, and that they may blaspheme the Son, and yet, on the terms of the gospel, be forgiven ; but that, if they blaspheme the Holy Ghost, they cannot be forgiven. Consequently, the Holy Ghost is not a mere influence or attribute of the Father, or of the Son ; for if he were, to blaspheme that influence or attribute, would be the same thing as to blaspheme the Father, or the Son. But a *distinction* is here made by our Saviour, between that blasphemy which is against the Holy Ghost, and all other kinds, *wherewithsoever* they shall blaspheme. Since, therefore, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is distinct from that against the Father, or the Son, the Holy Ghost is distinct from either of the other adorable persons in the Trinity ; and being one against whom men are liable to commit blasphemy, this distinction implies personal or voluntary intelligent agency." \*

Peter said to Ananias, "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?" Acts, 5 : 3. The same apostle immediately adds, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Uniting this question and assertion together, "theologians have, in all ages, inferred that the Holy Ghost is God." † But, even if it could be shown that the conclusion of divines touching this passage, has been broader than their premises, one thing is certain ; "Sin can be committed against nothing but a person." Wherefore, as sin can be committed against the Spirit, we must admit that the Spirit is a person. Furthermore, if the Spirit be a person, he is no less than the *third* in the adorable Godhead, for surely he is neither human nor angelic, nor simply super-angelic.

---

\* Doc. Tract, No. 10, p. 4.

† Bloomfield.

*The Operations of the Spirit.*

Should it appear that the Holy Ghost performs works which none but a personal agent can execute, then the logical deduction must be, that he is a personal agent ; moreover, if it be found that the nature of the works is such, as to require an infinite agent for their accomplishment, then the inference is irresistible, that the Holy Spirit is an infinite Agent, is really God.

Now it may be laid down, as an impregnable position, that "the particular acts, which are ascribed to the Holy Spirit and its inspirations, are such as are totally inconsistent with any idea but that of his being a *person*."\* Our resort is to the Scriptures ; and let us carefully pass from page to page, in the divine volume, that we may ascertain what testimony they bear, in regard to the Spirit, whose nature and offices we are seeking to understand.

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isa. 59 : 19. "And it was revealed unto him, by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Luke, 2 : 26. "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you, in the same hour, what ye ought to say." Luke, 12 : 12. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." John, 16 : 8. "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." verse 13. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost." Romans, 5 : 5. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the Spirit of a man, which is in him. Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2 : 10, 11. "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Eph. 4 : 30. "God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to

---

\* Robert Hall.

salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. 2: 13. "He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Tit. 3: 5. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter, 1: 21. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Rev. 2: 29.

These are some of the numerous representations, touching the operations of the Holy Spirit, as his acts are recorded for our instruction. What is their obvious import? Is the conclusion forced upon us, that the Spirit is nothing but an influence? Rather, must we not say, "the powers attributed to him are such, that they can belong only to a divine person?"\*

Christ was set apart by the Holy Ghost, for his special work in the plan of redemption. That divine Being came down upon him at his entrance upon public life. The Spirit led him into the wilderness to be tried there; and when he returned, and began his ministry, he read, with direct application to himself, the following language: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach," etc. Isa. 61: 1. A *special* anointing occurred at the time of the Saviour's baptism. "Lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him."

The mission of the Son to earth being completed, the salvation of the world is intrusted to the Spirit. Christ's apostles were not permitted to leave Jerusalem, after the ascension of their Master, till they had been endowed for their work by the Holy Ghost, which event, previously predicted, occurred on the day of Pentecost. Their subsequent ministry was successful, or otherwise, just as the Spirit blessed them, or the contrary. When *he* works by it, human instrumentality becomes eminently useful in extending the triumphs of truth. His presence being withheld, planting and watering secure no

---

\* Bishop Tomlin.



increase. "The church is taught to depend entirely on *him* for needed grace, to the end of time." Zion's prosperity is wholly in *his* power. No agency besides, regenerates and sanctifies the heart, none other demolishes the dark systems of error and superstition. For the heart to renew itself, is "as impossible as to have been the author of its own existence."\* The Spirit is the author of the means of grace — *the gospel is his institution*; for he inspired men to write the will of Heaven. All may, however, be attributed to the Father, or the Son; to either, or to both, conjointly; and the fact that the same divine works are ascribed to each of the persons in the God-head, shows that they are "the same in substance, equal in power and glory," and should be worshipped with like honors.

*The Argument summed up.*

In concluding this discussion in respect to the Spirit, the writer avails himself of an excellent summary, contained in a volume much used.† The language, however, in the quotation, varies somewhat from the original.

The masculine pronoun is employed in speaking of the Holy Spirit. He is described as having a will to choose, understanding to know, and power to execute his purposes; is represented as grieved, as interceding, commanding, forbidding, reproving, testifying, instructing. We are baptized into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and as the first two are persons, so also is the last. We conclude, therefore, the Holy Spirit is a distinct, intelligent person, and not a quality, or attribute.

Again; sin against the Holy Ghost is unpardonable; he is the author of miracles, of spiritual gifts; he sanctifies hearts, is omnipotent, omniscient, and eternal. Sometimes he is called God; honor and worship are rendered to him. Therefore he is a divine person.

---

\* Leighton.

† Comp. Comm., Vol. V., p. 650.



Moreover, the Spirit is distinguished from the Father and the Son, by the form of baptism, and by the apostolic benediction. He is said to be sent by the Father and the Son, and therefore is neither one nor the other of these. It is by him that he hath access unto the Father ; hence he is not the Father. The distinction of the three persons was made prominent at the baptism of Christ, for they were all present ; the Father, by a voice, saying, " This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," the Spirit, " in a bodily shape like a dove." We conclude, therefore, that the Holy Ghost is a divine person, yet in some way to be distinguished from God the Father, and God the Son.

*The Doctrine of the Trinity comprehensively expressed.*

With reference to the entire subject, briefly considered in a number of the preceding pages, namely, the *Trinity*, the whole may, perhaps, be comprehensively expressed thus : But one God exists, yet " there are two persons, each of whom, with the Father, we are led to consider as God, and to ascribe to all the three, distinct personal properties."

Some of the terms employed in theological discussions, pertaining to the Trinity, are not, it is true, found in the Scriptures ; still, no valid objection can be urged against them on this account, provided the ideas conveyed are biblical. Technical words are necessary in every science. So established are certain modes of expression, concerning the divine nature, that whoever rejects them exposes himself to well-founded suspicion. It is better to let the ancient religious landmarks remain. The orthodox fathers were probably as wise as have been any of their successors. No candid person will stumble over the formularies embodied in evangelical creeds. Every religious society, like other organizations, must have certain articles of compact. If there be no rules of agreement, it will not

be known who do or do not harmonize in sentiment. He justly excites suspicion, who objects to long established modes of presenting any doctrinal truth. We are not wise, but foolish and wicked, when we seek to unsettle the faith of men, because, in our estimation, an injudicious use has been made of certain words.

*General Observations on the Trinity.*

Doubtless we can perplex ourselves with the mysteries of the Trinity, and so we may with those of the unity of God. We have no means of information, in regard to either, except what the Divine Being has given us. The great facts of both are clearly revealed ; and, with a humble mind, a ready reception will not be withheld. But a proud heart repels the most important doctrines of the Bible. The secret of the Lord is with the meek.

Experiments to build up religious societies and churches on other principles than those embracing, as fundamentals, the doctrines of the existence and perfect equality of three persons in the Godhead, must fail,—have they not ? The blessing of the Triune is indispensable to the success of such enterprises as seek the good of man and the glory of the Almighty ; that, however, never rests, where the true nature of the Godhead is not acknowledged. If the *rejecters* of the Trinity would show their power to help humanity, they must plant themselves among the heathen and there try an experiment. But pagans cannot be improved by them.

To all who are exercised with sceptical feelings in regard to the true character of Christ, the *personality* and *divinity* of the Spirit, I would say, acquaint yourselves with your own ill-desert, and you will feel that the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is essential to your present peace and future happiness. Those made spiritually alive, know that it required

omnipotence to quicken them. A convicted sinner desires none but an infinite Saviour; and the true Christian acknowledges a Triune God, Father, Son and Spirit.

Some probably there are, who, from circumstances beyond their own control, are associated with the deniers of Christ's true divinity, yet trust in him alone for salvation. Were they to become favorably situated, for receiving the truth as it is in Jesus, no longer would they allow their influence to be against a doctrine which they now, *in heart*, believe.

Why, we are asked, is not the Trinity brought to view in that model prayer of our Lord? In reply, we say, that it is most certainly included by implication. The *name* of God, which we are to pray may be hallowed, embraces what revelation makes known concerning the nature of Jehovah. Nor is it an objection to this interpretation, that the word Father is the immediate antecedent to name. All the persons in the Supreme Being constitute only one God, who is the Father of the human family. As a farther answer, we direct attention to the illustration of this form of prayer, contained in the entire Scriptures of the New Testament, especially the Epistles, those inspired developments of the brief discourses of Jesus. He left much for the apostles to explain.

The warfare against the doctrine of the Trinity was early begun and has often been fiercely waged. Wherefore are some so hostile to a sentiment, the practical influence of which has never been injurious to any one? Trinitarians are ever the most enthusiastic laborers in benevolence. Nearly, if not quite all the sacrifices made among men for the world's good, are undergone by those who believe unwaveringly in the *supreme divinity* of Christ. Ah, their opponents see that if the doctrine of the Trinity be held, then themselves must be regarded as fearfully depraved and hopelessly lost, except as sovereign mercy may interpose in their behalf. But their self-righteousness forbids them to receive, as fact, what so abases themselves.

## THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD.

None can reasonably deny that the volume by us named the *Bible*, is the production of mind. Surely it did not come into existence by chance, for it bears unequivocal marks of intelligent design. Some *Being*, then, is its author. But,

*The Devil is not the Author of the Bible.*

Were he possessed of the requisite ability, no motive could have induced him to publish it. There is not a chapter in the entire book, which favors his unholy aims. Wherefore, had the ability to form it been at his command, to undertake such a work would have marked him as consummately foolish. He is made to appear at decided disadvantage in it from first to last, being introduced as a liar, and always represented under that character. The utter subversion of his kingdom, on earth, is the manifest aim of the wonderful enterprises authorized in the Bible. Hence his great effort has been, in all ages since the book was written, to destroy it; nor will his opposition cease till the time specified in the Apocalypse, when an angel of the Lord shall bind him and cast him into the bottomless pit. Thousands of men, not deficient in respect to talent, have been employed by the adversary, in successive ages, to prove the Scriptures unworthy of confidence, and they have toiled unceasingly, and, if success has not crowned their labors, the failure is not attributable either to him or to them. The devil would not thus seek to destroy his own production. His fierce opposition proves the book not to be one of the numerous issues of his press.

*Wicked men did not produce the Bible.*

If, in any age of the world, a company of this class could have enjoyed ability sufficient for its production, which is by

no means admitted ever to have been possible, the disposition would always have been wanting. The same reasons why Satan would not publish such a book, are equally opposed to the supposition of their being its authors. Who does not know that the greatest hostility to their motives, principles, and practices, is apparent in all parts of the Scriptures? It is amazing, that any person, claiming to possess good sense, should suggest the idea that the Bible is a work of wicked men. They would be most unwise to compose it, were they sufficiently intellectual. It is violently opposed to them, and contains not a word of consolation for them. The rebukes it administers, and the anathemas which it hurls upon them, are so terrific and overwhelming, that their very souls recoil at its announcements. But few of them are willing to *hear* what the Scriptures do say. Those places where the Bible is explained, are the last on earth to which the wicked love to resort, and the most awful curses that fall from their lips, are uttered against it and its heavenly-minded expounders.

Did wicked men compose the book which they hate, more than they hate Satan himself? The suggestion is absurd. To make it, seems sufficient to mark him who utters it as extremely obtuse in intellect. Wicked men the authors of the Bible! That holy book pours upon all the unholy the quenchless fire of God!

But I shall not leave this point with barely showing, that wicked men *would* not write the Bible if they could. They have no ability to do it. It has always been as certainly out of their power to compose such a volume as it would be to create the universe. The combined talent of all the ungodly who have ever lived, could not produce the first chapter of Genesis. I have no fear that I shall express myself extravagantly in this particular. The conceptions in *that* chapter are not human—they are infinitely above the range of mere mortal thought. “In the beginning God created the heaven



and the earth." This verse contains enough to employ the mind of a created being through infinite ages. "In the beginning." When was that time? Or, rather, at what point in eternity was it? How many millions of years have rolled away since the beginning? Can mortals inform us? No! Can the angels? We presume not. "Heaven and earth." How much is embraced in the term, Heaven? Who can tell? Are wicked men able to answer the question? No! They have no means of knowing how much is comprehended in that word. "Created." What is it to create? Who can show us *how* God created the heaven and the earth? We should be pleased to meet those, who suppose the Bible was "got up" by wicked men, at this first chapter in the book, and hear from them an explication of the manner in which the ideas expressed in it first entered the minds of the men, who, as they suppose, gave it birth. In our day, we see none of the unholy bearing about such great ideas as are therein presented. If all the original thoughts which have occupied the minds of unsanctified men, since the creation of Adam, were consolidated, they would not be equal to those in the opening chapter of the Scriptures.

*Good Men did not originate the Bible.*

If, in any sense, it be their production, they did not give it existence on their own authority, for they are *honest*. But if this book be a mere human fabrication, the writers of it were *dishonest*. The volume comes to us as the word of the Lord. Hence, if it be *not* from him, the writers have deceived us; but good men will not deceive. If, then, good men wrote the Bible, they did not write it as a composition of their own; they must have been the *penmen of the Lord*. Now the language we know to be human, but the Scriptures evidently were written by men who supposed themselves acting as the

amanuenses of Jehovah. Were they mistaken? Is it possible, after all, that they exhibited their own thoughts, under the impression that the Lord was operating through them? No; for even *good* men have ever been incapable of producing such a book as the Bible. The characteristics of the volume, excepting the mere words in which the thoughts are clothed, are not those of any purely earthly writings. True, the thoughts of the wise are, at times, introduced, yet the skill with which these are selected and arranged, as well as the forms of expression in which they appear, are not the offspring of created intellect. We are in possession of a variety of writings, the product of men distinguished both for learning and piety; many excellent works have been produced by them; but there is nothing in them which will compare with the Scriptures. The best productions of the ablest and most holy, fall every way inexpressibly short of the contents of the Bible.

*Holy Angels are not the Authors of the Bible.*

Should this high order of intelligences present a volume to man, they would not do it by deception. Holy beings cannot deceive, for the act of deceiving is not a characteristic of holiness. But if angels of heaven wrote the Bible, they have deceived all to whom their work has been furnished. Though we must admit our ignorance of angelic ability, yet we do not suppose it *possible*, even for angels, to produce a book like the Bible. We are not, indeed, sufficiently acquainted with their talents to judge of what they are capable, still it is not presumptuous to suggest the utter improbability that any *created* beings could have produced these writings. Not the least reason can be shown why we ought to attribute them to such a source. Yet the Scriptures are the production of mind. Who, then, is their author?

*The Bible appears to be the Word of God.*

Whether regarded as a whole, or examined in its several parts, such is the fact. It is said, that those who have studied comparative anatomy, can determine to what species an animal belongs by seeing only a single bone, every species being distinguishable by having not only general marks of its own, but likewise, by being stamped distinctively in the *minutiæ* of its entire framework. So is the Bible distinct from all other books. Not a leaf taken from any part of it can be mistaken, by one familiar with writings, for a portion of another book. The Bible, however, as a whole, and in its various parts, is not more manifestly *distinct*, than it is *divine*. It addresses us with the highest authority. We feel, when reading it, that we are communing with one who is God over all. The deep solemnity pervading it, is not elsewhere found. The knowledge displayed in it, is peculiar to God; the wisdom exhibited is not finite. What subduing energy is conveyed in its unassuming language! The sinner trembles before it, and the saint is transported with unutterable joy.

*The Bible claims to be the Word of God.*

It declares itself to be from him, and demands an acknowledgment of its claims. Some authors send out their books with an apology or a preface, to win the reader's favor. Far otherwise is the address of this book. There is no apology on its pages; it has no preface. The first verse contains a bold announcement of a fact, and this fact we are to receive without cavil or doubt. It is not even intimated, that any one would *dare* question its authority. The word spoken, is uttered with the authority of Jehovah. Such is the character of all the statements, — they boldly *demand* our belief. "Thus saith

the Lord," is sometimes prefixed, and this is supposed to be sufficient to secure the attention and obedience of those who hear, and so it is, if those addressed be not dead in transgression. It would be strange, if God should address us with the timidity with which one erring creature speaks to his fellows. The Almighty has no consciousness of liability to mistake, but knows whereof he affirms. Though man should not give him credit for truth, the whole universe besides responds to what he asserts, and *the authority of the book is evidence that it came from God.*

*The Bible is proved to be the Word of God.*

By evidence internal and external, by facts, institutions, and a great number of the most competent witnesses, — among whom are Jesus Christ and his apostles, — the point is rendered perfectly obvious ; is placed beyond a reasonable doubt.

The *Church* has received the Scriptures as infallible truth, ever since they were published ; nor has she, at any time, had occasion to fear that they are not what they claim to be. In every age they have been "mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds."

Just so far as individuals and communities conform to the teachings of this book, they are prosperous and happy. Let it be adopted as the only rule of faith ; let its principles be acted upon, by all men, under every variety of circumstances ; then wars will cease, social feuds be known no more ; fanaticism will die, the race of impostors become extinct, true piety prevail, and the millennium bless the world. Then will the morning stars again sing, and the sons of God again shout for joy over the earth, as they did when it rolled from the hands of its Maker, and man stood forth, exultant, in the divine image. Here it may be stated, that it is not a primary object of the Scriptures, to prove the existence of a Supreme



Being, but that they, as a whole, and in every part, furnish convincing proof that such an Infinite Intelligence does exist. Their existence is inexplicable, except on the assumption that he exists, for He and none else can be their author.

#### HINTS IN REGARD TO REVELATION.

##### *Science and Revelation.*

Whenever new discoveries have been made in natural science, infidelity has hailed the event with joy, as if they would prove the Bible unworthy of confidence. But the season of such rejoicing has hitherto been invariably short. So far are developments of this nature from operating against the high claims of the Scriptures, that the truth of what this holy book contains, is confirmed by them. Some of the facts recorded on the sacred page, are also written on the face of nature; others are engraven on the ancient monuments of men, and a class are handed down by tradition, in countries where the Bible is not known. This fact is brought to light through scientific investigation. As science receives its devotees principally from those nations where the oracles of God have been known, and are to some degree respected, it naturally occurs that a comparison is generally soon made between its trophies and the statements of the Scriptures. Both friends and enemies of revelation are eager to ascertain who gains or loses by scientific enterprises.

Science prove the Bible false! We need entertain no fears of this sort. The infidel may be safely challenged to investigate any and every department of Nature. Astronomy has long joined hand in hand with revealed religion. Chemistry shows us, written on every drop of water, the pleasing truth, **GOD IS GOOD.** Geology comes not to destroy, but to fulfil;



comes not to take away our Lord, but to tell us of things which he has done; things which have been hid from the foundation of the world.

With harmonious voice the believers in the divine origin, and in the infallible authority of the Bible may say, — let the earth be explored; go to its centre, ye whose office it is to open her wonders; if ceaseless fires there burn, they exist because the Deity kindled them at first, and now fans them with his own unexpiring breath. If the earth has been transformed and transformed, with four successive creations and three successive extinctions, God has, in each case, been the creator and the destroyer. If the mountains have, as geology affirms, been thrown up from the depths of the sea, they rise, on that account, none the less sublimely, and it was the omnipotent agency of Him who gave us the Bible, that caused them to be elevated.

Let every science be pressed to its utmost extent. To collect and classify shells; to investigate the mineral kingdom; to analyze and systematize plants of every genus, species and variety, from the moss on the wall to the towering cedar, is to help unfold the book of nature, which is a book of God. He who labors piously and successfully in any department of science, is doing good service to his fellow-men, and is honoring that Being who is the maker, sustainer, and ruler of all things, and who fills immensity with his presence.

The followers of the Lamb can surely have no war with the facts and principles of natural religion, for the heavens declare the glory of God, and the earth is full of his goodness. But believers in Jesus know that it is in vain to look for salvation any where except to him who died on the cross. "The knowledge of man is as the waters, some descending from above, some springing from beneath." Let the sons and daughters of the Lord study the works of their Maker, ac-

quiring, to the utmost in their power, the wisdom thus attainable; still, they must remember, that *grace* comes down like the dew and the rain. The means of illumination, afforded by the world around us, avail but little when help does not *descend*. We shall grope in moral midnight, if left with no other source of light than the earth affords. With a high degree of mere mental culture, man may, in spite of his acquisitions, terrify the world with his crimes.

*Doubting Revelation is Irrational.*

There would be as much wisdom or wit in denying the power of the sun to shine, as in refusing to Christ the ability to forgive sins. We may as rationally affirm, that the wind never blows, as to assert that the Holy Spirit has never renewed a heart. There is overwhelming proof that the *Author* of nature is likewise the giver of the volume, deemed by many sacred and infallible; and though the credentials with which the Bible comes before us vary, in some respects, from those presented by the earth, as evidence of its own divine origin, both nature and revelation ought to be acknowledged as products of the one Jehovah. The world of mind is as clearly made known to us, as is that of matter; and future eternal existence is as certain as is our present being. Faith's eye is not more fallible than is that of the body. Why not believe the Almighty as readily as a fellow-being? "Scepticism in religion is no better than downright infidelity," and he that withholds confidence from any part of Christianity, would be consistent, should he doubt on all subjects; yea, even question whether his own existence be a *reality* or only a phantom. It is an observation of Lord Bacon, that "there was never a miracle wrought by God to convert an atheist because the light of nature might have led him to confess a God." If

the external and internal proofs of Christianity do not cause men, to whom it comes, to see the truth and excellency of the system, and to acknowledge its divine original, then are they wilfully blind, and may justly be left to perish in their adherence to darkness.

It is not strange that most Frenchmen have no belief of any kind, being not only *infidels* in regard to revealed religion, but *sceptical* on all points; for having rejected the light from above, why should they not that which is dimly reflected by terrestrial objects? Nor is it a matter of surprise that Hume, with his positions in regard to revelation, should have denied, "that there can be such a thing as one act, or effect, or event, causing another;" and should have held "it impossible that any such thing should be, that any rational meaning should belong to such words" as connection, influence, power.

*Right Moral Affections requisite for a Reception of Revelation.*

It is here in place to state a most important fact, namely, that *right affections* will insure the acceptance of the doctrines and requirements embraced in the Scriptures. Such are essential, and, if they be secured, other obstacles will vanish; perhaps, however, not at once. The human intellect is so weak, that great principles are often apprehended by it slowly. Faith, therefore, must be exercised perseveringly. The following may not here be inappropriate. "If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end with doubts; but, if he will be content to begin with doubts, he shall end in certainties." We must sit down, humbly, at the feet of him who was "*meek and lowly*," in order that the word of God become sweeter to us than honey. Religious perplexities should be all settled at the feet of Jesus. A haughty spirit can never delight in the statutes of the Lord. Pride ruins millions of men; it hurled angels from the skies.

*Speculation on Revelation is Dangerous.*

Of Aristotle it has been remarked, that "he never nameth or mentioneth any ancient author or opinion, but to refute and reprove." Some minds are remarkably fond of the employment, in which this Grecian sage apparently delighted, of demolishing what others have reared. "Metaphysicians can unsettle things; but they can erect nothing." When speculations are pressed too far in the difficult science of mind, as it stands related to the moral government of Jehovah, there is a possibility that the temerity thus indulged, may be rebuked by the high and lofty *One*, in such a manner that the guilty individual will end his probation more of a sceptic than of a believer, though he did not intend to renounce the faith of the saints. "Nearness to God is nearness to truth." We cannot, be it remembered, draw nigh to him, by being wise not only *above*, but *contrary* to what is written. A Greek epigram speaks of *ascending to heaven downward, and of descending upwards*. He that was God manifested in the flesh has said, "every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Blessed are they, who, having brought themselves down, are lifted up by the Lord.

*Examples.*

Some years since, an individual, who had acquired a good reputation as an orthodox interpreter of the Scriptures, began to startle the Christian world by his speculations on certain points of doctrine. At length the faith of believers in that fundamental point, the *resurrection*, was boldly assailed in a volume of no mean dimensions. Having given the work a slight examination, I inserted the following brief article in a religious paper, soon after this strange book was published.

“It is reasonable to suppose that the great luminary which has recently shed a *marvellous* light upon the doctrine of the *resurrection*, will amaze the world with other beams and streams from the same source. Ere long, doubtless, by it all darkness connected with the mighty events, past, present, and future, in God’s providential government, will be dissipated. The flood may yet be made to appear a fiction—the ark only a timber raft—the smoke of burning Sodom but wreaths from coal-pits—Abraham’s offering Isaac, a dream or a fox-hunt; and so on. This new light already presages the possibility of scattering whatever is miraculous about miracles, and encourages us to hope that it will yet pour such effulgence upon the throne of the Eternal, as to lay open to mortals all the things hidden from the foundation of the world. Verily, ours is a new epoch in the earth’s history. Men, at least in their own apprehension, have become wonderfully wise!—Still, were it proper for one who has far more confidence in the *darkness* of Revelation, than in the brightest radiance of uninspired reason, to interrogate the author of the late treatise on the resurrection, the writer would inquire, why it may not yet appear, in the progress of biblical science, that in the Godhead are thirteen, or thirty, or three hundred, or three hundred thousand persons? True, he affirms that there are only three; but how does he know, that a number larger than mortals can count may not hereafter be *evolved*? I here add that we were not necessitated to wait long for additional developments of a character as strange and unscriptural, as those in the volume named; for soon he who had ventured to attack the very foundation on which the church rests her faith in the Redeemer, was left to wander into the mists of Swedenborgianism, where he has been ever since, groping about, seeking light and finding none. Now he can speculate as he pleases, without being called to account by man.



Another instance, illustrative of the danger attending speculation in religious matters, is that of a clergyman, who for some years occupied an evangelical pulpit. First he was left to assume that himself had more skill in solving hard questions in sacred philology, than all his brethren or fathers in the circle of divines; next, to doubt the authority of an inspired apostle; and finally, to take that last step short of open infidelity, namely, a denial of the Supreme Divinity of Christ. But short was his career. Death summoned him to the tribunal of God, before he could fairly get under way in plotting and prosecuting evil to Zion. Doubtless angels exclaimed as he disappeared, "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord!"

Let one more example suffice. The Christian community is now sadly affected, while Satan and his servants are exulting over the mysticisms that a speculator on sacred subjects has thrown around revealed facts. A mind of brilliant parts, but without balance, is troubling Israel through an unholy love of sporting with abstruse doctrines. What the end is to be in this case, the future alone can decide. God may justly send strong delusions, with their terrific consequences, upon any religious teacher who departs from his appropriate work, and casts darkness before the eyes of saints and sinners. It is no proof of great talent or of desirable scholarship, to write so darkly, that no person can decipher the author's meaning. All mystics would do well to cease publishing their incoherent thoughts, till themselves know what they desire to affirm and what to deny. It would seem that certain expounders of the Scriptures both believe and disbelieve the same important truths.

## INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

*Definition of the Term.*

A SUBJECT, which stands connected with the vitals of true religion, is included in the caption prefixed to this article. Christianity claims to possess in the Bible an infallible guide. Implicit confidence is demanded, in all the contents of that volume. Talent, of the highest order, sanctified by the Spirit of God, has often been employed, in defining, arguing, and elucidating, the doctrine now to be discussed. Inspiration is not defined in precisely the same words, by those who agree in the main particulars respecting it. By some the subject is divided into several parts; as the inspiration of revelation, by which new truths were communicated; future events, as foretold by prophets come under this head. The inspiration of suggestion is another branch. Many facts, not absolutely beyond the reach of the writer's mind, would yet have escaped his notice, had not the Holy Spirit brought them to view. Besides these named, there is the inspiration of superintendence, by which the penmen were guarded against mistakes in recording what lay within their knowledge. That all which is implied in these separate representations is embraced in the doctrine of inspiration must be admitted; but of what use is such a division of the term? A definition comprehending the whole import in a single expression, is very desirable. Cannot such an one be framed? Why may we not say that *in writing the Scriptures the penmen were infallibly instructed and guided in every part of the work?* or in sacred diction, "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Can the multiplication of words render more explicit and plain, the idea intended to be expressed, by all who are orthodox?

Inspiration, though a subject complete in itself, is yet rather a link in a chain than an independent circle. The impress of God is indeed on every page of the Bible; its divine original is conspicuous; still, there are modes of reasoning, by which, a truth entirely clear to a Christian apprehension, may be made convincingly evident to those not prepared to appreciate the spiritual nature of the sacred volume.

We begin our argument by proving the genuineness and authenticity \* of the writings of the New Testament; showing that about eighteen hundred years since, such a personage as Jesus Christ is represented to have been, existed on earth in the manner described, and that the individuals, whose names are attached to the several books, were not imaginary beings; neither deceivers nor deceived, but men who lived at the time intimated; and that they exhibited the characters ascribed to them; also, that they were every way competent to act the part, which they are supposed to have performed in the publishing of Christianity, and that they were entitled to full confidence. Thus much is here taken for granted; for the establishing of those positions belongs to the evidences of Christianity; not to the subject already brought to view and now to be our theme. Let it be understood that "we found the historical certainty of the inspiration of our sacred writers, on the authority and credibility of Jesus as an immediate divine Teacher." With these preliminaries, the way is prepared to proceed to a candid and careful consideration of the important topic before us.

### *The Promise of Christ.*

It is evident that Christ promised peculiar assistance to his apostles, as he first commissioned them to teach and to preach.

---

\* It should be stated that different writers on the evidences of Christianity, use these terms somewhat unlike.

“But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour, what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.” Matt. 10 : 19, 20. With reference to another, but specially trying condition into which they would be brought, he said to them, “I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.” Luke 21 : 15. These passages are not exhibited as positive proof of the doctrine to which we are directing our attention; they do, however, bear directly on it, and afford a *presumptive* argument in favor of it. We may argue that if Christ furnished his apostles for duties less important, he would certainly qualify them for those of vastly greater moment. If he rendered them infallible, when their errors could easily have been corrected by himself, can we suppose he left them to commit mistakes after his withdrawal?

As the time of the Saviour's departure from the earth drew near, he was more full in his instructions and assurances. “And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth.” John 14 : 16, 17. This Comforter was to be in the place of Christ, as teacher, guide, and protector. “He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14 : 5. The same promise in substance, is contained in John 15 : 26; and in the verse following, Jesus says, “Ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.” A repetition of the assurance that the Holy Ghost shall come to abide with them, is found in the 16th chap. 13th verse of the same evangelist. “Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth.” Not into every thing in the universe designated truth; but into all the truth relating to the object of Christ's mission.



Just as the Redeemer was leaving this world, and returning to that whence he came, he addressed the apostles in these comprehensive words: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matt. 28: 18-20. These persons were constituted the instructors of the nations; from them all men were to receive the doctrines of the gospel; truth only, truth of infinite importance, was to be heralded by them through the world. Such a trust as theirs was, transcends immeasurably all the interests of human embassies. Probably not a word of their Lord's history had at this time been written; nor were their memories more tenacious of what they had heard from his lips, than would ours be in like circumstances. Illuminators of the world they are commanded to be, and yet what were their qualifications at the time? Most unfit they must have known themselves to be. Ah, how deplorable would the eternal prospects of the millions of human beings have been, had Jesus committed the gospel to "the eleven" with no guarantee of infallible guidance!

First, he declares that his ability is unlimited on earth and in heaven; and then he assures the recipients of his command, that he will attend them, and that they shall be able every way to fulfil his orders. But not in person would he traverse the globe with them; the promise of his presence here made, is only another mode of expressing what is uttered in the passages previously quoted. It was God the Spirit, that should abide perpetually with the apostles. Can the doctrine of inspiration, as embraced in promise, be more distinctly taught than it was by Christ in his last commission? Detract in the least from this amount of meaning; allow that he intended less than infallible guidance, and in what condi-



tion does he place those divinely appointed instructors of mankind? They cannot obey him, if he perform not for them all which is implied in the highest sense assigned to the term inspiration. We must admit that Jesus promised his apostles entire freedom from error, and a perfect exhibition of truth to their own minds by the Holy Spirit, or regard him as leaving the world before he had wholly completed his own proper work. Had the Saviour prepared an entire system of doctrines, and practical regulations for all times and places, the inspiration, of which we treat, would have been, if at all demanded, less necessary. We know not that he left a sentence on record, written by himself. If Jesus therefore did not unqualifiedly assure the apostles of the presence of the Holy Spirit with them, and if he did not accomplish perfectly such an assurance, we have no satisfactory proof that their teachings were right, and that what we denominate the New Testament accords with the divine Mind. Confident, however, we are that being the true Messiah, Christ *could not* have left the family of man with no infallible directory — certainly he *did not*. We may ask why, O blessed Master, didst thou not write with thine own fingers a book of doctrines and duties? Yet who will doubt the wisdom of Christ? Closely connected in time and of the same import with the passages last quoted, is the following, which was spoken just as Jesus was ascending to heaven. “And behold I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” Luke 24: 49. In Acts 1: 8, is farther information concerning this indication: “But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Such was the farewell assurance received by the apostles from their Master. Thus spake the Omnipotent, the unerring Jesus.

*The Fulfilment of the Promise.*

According to his direction, they remained in the sacred city till the pledged endowment came. In a few, not more than ten, days subsequently to the ascension of the Saviour, the *Comforter* arrived. Those who had received the promise "were all with one accord in one place," when in a most manifest and miraculous manner, the Spirit descended upon them; "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." On that occasion were present individuals "out of every nation under heaven," yet each one heard, in his own native tongue, the gospel from the apostles' lips. The fact was truly wonderful. "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? And how hear we every man in his own tongue wherein we were born?" Acts 2: 7, 8. Well might those who had come to Jerusalem from countries afar off, be amazed; the scene, however, to the apostles, was only what they had expected, and that which so astounded the mixed multitude, was but the commencement of the fulfilment of Christ's promise to qualify, fully, the twelve for the discharge of their great commission; furthermore, what was thus begun continued during their lives. Nor were all miraculous qualifications confined to them; Paul was called into the apostolic office, and became preëminently distinguished. No one wrote more than he, or acted a part greater in settling the new dispensation. It was necessary, also, for the highest degree of success in the early efforts for the dissemination of truth, that other individuals should be made co-workers with those, who were sent forth immediately by the Saviour. Hence certain special divine endowments were bestowed on different persons, yet the gift of writing was not one of them. Every instance, however, of special conferments was only in

fulfilment of the original promise which necessarily included the imparting of wisdom to the apostles for the selecting of assistants, in their onerous and vastly comprehensive work, and also the graciously qualifying of the selected persons for their peculiar duties.

*Evidence of Inspiration from Particular Passages.*

Leaving the promise and the commencement of its fulfilment, our thoughts appropriately trace the record which these inspired men have left, to ascertain what incidental evidence they afford of inspiration. If these men wrote as moved by the Spirit, their language will present, at least, occasional evidence of the fact. Uttering, with authority, the mind of Christ, it is supposed that, now and then, their testimony to their own inspiration would be given. Trace the Epistles, in the order in which they stand. At the opening of that to the Romans, the writer speaks thus of himself: "Paul a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God." In the first letter to the Corinthians, the writer of it says: "Now we have received, not the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." 2:12, 13. See Gal. 1:11, 12. "But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." In 1 Thess. 4:8, occurs this statement, "He therefore, that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." Every sentence in the short epistle of James, comes to us as authoritatively as if dropping from the lips of God. Peter asserts that the gospel is preached, "with the Holy Ghost sent down from

heaven." 1 Pet. 1 : 12. Again : " But the word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word, which, by the gospel, is preached unto you." Verse 25. John says : " We are of God ; he that knoweth God, heareth us ; he that is not of God, heareth not us." 1 Epistle, 4 : 6. One short chapter is from the pen of Jude, and that is prefaced by his declaring himself to be " the servant of Jesus Christ." He exhorts the recipients of his brief address to remember the words which had been spoken to them by the apostles of the Lord ; and why, except because their present and eternal well-being depended on complying with these instructions ? Some difficulty having arisen in a portion of the church, a counsel of apostles and elders was convened together for deliberation concerning it, and the conclusion was to send a letter and delegates to those in trouble. In their communication, this phraseology occurs : " For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us ;" etc. Acts, 15 : 28. The obvious import of which is, that their decision was made under the influence of the Spirit. The form of expression, " it seemed," does not imply doubt ; decrees were thus prefaced. Not only was there harmoniousness of sentiment between the Spirit and themselves, but the result was the fruit of his teachings.

The foregoing quotations are given as examples of what the writings of the apostles contain, and as illustrative of our subject. Being infallibly guided by the Saviour, the sacred penmen were as well qualified to testify concerning their own inspiration as in regard to any other point. True witnesses do not falsify ; those guided by the unerring Spirit did not certify falsehood concerning themselves. Such quotations as I have made were vitally important parts of the Epistles. A question has been sometimes raised in respect to the writings of Mark and Luke, — the latter of whom, it is conceded, wrote the Acts as well as that part of the New Testament bearing his name, — because neither of these individuals was an apostle.



In carrying out their commission, the inspired writers, as I have already stated, employed helpers. Such was, no doubt, the relation of the two persons above mentioned, to the twelve. What, these men named, wrote, was either dictated to them by some one or more of the apostles, or it was sanctioned by their authority. Paul evidently, at times, employed an amanuensis.

### *The Old Testament.*

That portion of the Scriptures known by the title of the Old Testament, is now as it was in the time of Christ, and every part of it was regarded by him and by the Jews as inspired. Our Lord and his disciples always made reference to it, and quoted from it as being of divine authority. This fact, that the Old Testament, now and in the time of Christ, is identical, deserves remembrance. Furthermore, two hundred and fifty-six times the Old Testament is cited in the New, and allusion is made in the latter to more than five hundred other passages in the former; nor is there any where the slightest intimation, that infallibility is not possessed by any chapter or verse. Indeed, Jesus and his apostles give to those writings the most exalted title possible, calling them the *Word of God*. Moreover, direct assertions are made by the Saviour and his servants, in proof of the inspiration of the Old Testament. The former uniformly pointed his hearers to those sacred pages for predictions concerning himself. Take an example from the Epistles: "And that, from a child, thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3: 15-17. Whether any part of the New Testament is included in the term Scripture or not, the



whole of the Old is ; and it is declared to be inspired and able to make wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ, and to render complete in all good works, the receiver. What is styled the Apocrypha never formed a part of the sacred volume, and ought not to be bound within the same cover. It has no more divine authority than has the Koran of Mohammed or the Veda of the Hindoo. Peter says, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. 1 : 21. Furthermore, the apostles classed together their own writings and those of the seers under the first dispensation, as in the following passages : "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone." Eph. 2 : 20. "That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." 2 Pet. 3 : 2.

A question which has elicited considerable discussion, relates to the words employed in conveying the truths taught by the Spirit,—Were these mediums of thought inspired? Unquestionably the Holy Ghost guarded them just as carefully as he did the ideas. Indeed, if the language be wrong, so are the sentiments. We have no other means of judging as to the mind of the Spirit, except these words. If such and only such were not secured, which convey to our understanding the exact truth, then are we without the ability of knowing it.

#### *Objections considered.*

It is objected, that the language of the Scriptures is purely human in appearance, and, therefore, these writings savor more of earth than of heaven. How, in reply, it may be inquired, can we be addressed, except by the modes of communication to which we are accustomed? Were a volume

placed in our hands purporting to be from God, and yet, in a tongue unknown to any nation on earth, it should be rejected as an imposition. There is but one way for Jehovah to communicate his will to man, and that is through the language of the latter. In the case supposed, the book would not be a revelation. A sacred volume is no manifestation of the Deity's pleasure, if its leaves are covered with obscurity.

Allied to the preceding objection is the following: Different writers record the same events in varied phraseology. How can they be inspired, and not record alike, the same facts? Is their practice consistent with the sentiment that they were inspired? Verily, wherein it should conflict with the doctrine of inspiration I do not perceive. The penmen were infallibly guided to record identical parts of Christ's history in diversified modes of expression, because, for several reasons, it was far preferable the language should not be uniform. They were inspired to employ different terms in stating the same facts. Variety is more pleasing than is a sameness. Besides, now we have as many witnesses for the facts of the Scriptures as there are individual penmen who have recorded them; whereas, if they all uttered the precise words of any one, it is questionable whether their statements would be regarded as testimony in any sense. At least, the query would arise, if there might not have been a collusion among them. What is more common than for writers now to set forth events and scenes in a great variety of modes of description, without departing, in the least, from the truth? Language is beautifully versatile; God has not shut us up to a few set expressions, in giving utterance to our thoughts in the ordinary affairs of life, and he designed his words to be, in this respect, conformed to the condition of the race. Inspired men were allowed to employ their own style in writing. As bearing on each of the foregoing objections, the ensuing sentiments of another are here appropriate. "The books are divine, and

yet they are human ; infallible, and yet indited by mortals like ourselves ; the word of God, and yet the word of man ; divine as to the matter, human as to the manner." I add, as a summary of all that may be advanced touching these objections, that the Scriptures are from heaven, but fitted to mankind on earth ; they bring down the will of Jehovah to the understanding of mortals ; their object is to reveal, not to conceal.

Many things are found in the Bible, seemingly of very little consequence ; and this circumstance is thought, by some, to militate against its inspiration. But why should an opposing argument be thus based ? The mind that can thus cavil, overlooks its own littleness. Had not much care been bestowed on the minutiae of the relations mutually existing among mankind, and, on those, binding us to the Most High, the Bible surely would not have met man's moral necessities. We are beings of very limited capacities ; trifles affect us sensibly and permanently. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth." Existence in time is made up of moments ; our dearest interests on earth and our eternal welfare depend, perhaps, upon what may be denominated the molecules of matters. In naught does the caviller's unreasonableness more strikingly appear, than in the objection before us. His own salvation is secured or lost, according to his treatment of what he scorns as revealed trifles. Who has authorized him thus to sit in judgment on God's Word ? Ah ! these little points will not seem trivial, if they shall be contemplated by him amid eternal blackness ! The fragment of a rock is truly small in comparison with a mountain of the same material ; yet the former may be the key-stone in an arch, on the stability of which, the lives and happiness of thousands may be resting. Ages are but a succession of very brief portions of time. Our globe is constituted of particles, not one of which, singly, merits any special regard. Heaven's bliss and hell's horrors are composed of successive sensations.

Still farther, it is objected, that there are palpable contradictions in the Scriptures. This, verily, is a momentous charge against the divine oracles, and requires due notice. In regard to it, we find that persons raising the loudest cry are such as know but very little about the contents of our sacred book. Never having informed themselves, they utter anathemas at random. From some infidel publication they have gathered the words with which they carry on their crusade against inspiration. In what part of the volume these alleged contradictions exist, they know not ; and, when pressed, they cannot defend their own positions. Now, it is evident, that to an ignorant, contracted mind, certain statements may have the appearance of contradiction, and, at the same time, there be nothing in them which bears that semblance, to an intellect better qualified to judge of truth and error, congruity and antagonism. Suppose, however, conflicting passages do occur, the candid inquirer will be slow to reject the whole volume, till he has carefully weighed the solutions given of these difficulties by able critics. He will not madly resolve to burn his Bible because a seeming occasional discrepancy appears on its pages. Easy, indeed, it were for slight inaccuracies to have crept in through the heedlessness of transcribers, during the generations previous to printing. Copyists of the *lively oracles* do not claim to have been inspired. No evidence exists that a single doctrine has been perverted, or any instruction essential to man's temporal or eternal welfare, been vitiated. In these respects, the Bible speaks a uniform language from first to last. Letters being used for numerals, in the original languages of the Scriptures, and some of them being similar, yet representing different sums, might, without design, be wrongly transcribed, and thus actual contradictions may occur in various conceivable instances. If any one is disposed to reject the Word of God, for such a reason, let him prepare for the consequences which can neither be avoided nor easily endured.



Jehovah is jealous over his Revelation ; its pages are guarded by his armed omnipotence. No man may despise it without periling his own soul.

A serious charge has been preferred against the four Evangelists and other New Testament writers, touching their quotations from the Old Testament. It has been affirmed, that these sacred penmen grossly mistook the import of numerous passages cited by them from the pages composed during the former dispensation. Bold affirmations, on the part of opposers, have been met by calm and thorough investigation of the practice of the accused and of the principles by which the writers of the Gospels and of the Epistles, were governed in their selections from the law and the prophets. Particulars I need not here detail ; suffice it to say, that this cavil, like every other started against the doctrine of inspiration, is shown, by able critics, to be perfectly futile, and unworthy of being named by any person of candor. Sceptics are made, on this point, to appear in no enviable light ; they are shown to be ignorant of both Testaments, while the apostles stand before us infallibly inspired. There is the best of reasons for believing that every appropriation of Old Testament passages in the New, was made just as the Holy Spirit directed.

In conclusion, I say, that the doctrine which has now been briefly presented, clothes the Scriptures with an "infinite majesty and glory ;" it gives to every command, prohibition, promise and threatening, the highest authority ; and, though this subject requires a popular discussion, yet, well has it been observed, that "the Word of God, being the sword of the Spirit, needs not an arm of flesh to defend it."

#### TWO ARGUMENTS FOR SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.

##### *First Argument.*

The first is derived from their origin, which is heavenly. The Bible is from God. It is not possible, that it should have



had a less holy authorship. This statement is made with a full understanding of the frequent and violent attempts to prevent mankind from confiding in it. Infidels have spared no pains in their efforts to affix the stamp of reprobation on the volume held sacred by all Christians, but it is harmed by none of their assaults, for the more it is assailed, the clearer does its divine character come to light. All that hard-working opposers gain for themselves, is mortification and disgrace in the eyes of men, and the wrath of God. Let them have the pity and prayers of the righteous, that they may be influenced to abandon their folly and seek wisdom from the Scriptures ; yet in the name of the Bible, let all its enemies be challenged to exert themselves, day and night, to destroy not only its power, but also its very existence. Whoever desires to enter at large into the external evidences, that the Bible is from God, can find many excellent volumes which have been published on that subject. It is well that they have been written ; still, where the heart is right, internal evidence is sufficient. In such a case, the Scriptures are *felt* to be from above. It is not possible to create a suspicion to the contrary, in the mind of a humble, intelligent Christian. This fact then, that the Bible is from God, is a powerful reason why it should be searched. It was given for this end. Whatever it contains, those contents should be known ; but they never can be, otherwise than by careful study.

*Second Argument.*

My second argument is drawn from the nature of the contents. The volume is replete with information on subjects of the highest importance. Here is the history of the origin of the world, recorded in clear, forcible, and infallible language. No where else is there an authentic account of the beginning of the earth and its inhabitants. To reject this exhibition of

facts, is to involve us in utter darkness on points of vast interest. The commencement of those ancient nations, the origin of which is not enrolled in the Scriptures, remains wrapped in darkness impenetrable. Even the Roman empire, which does not profess to have existed more than about seven hundred and fifty years previous to the coming of Christ, affords no satisfactory account of its beginning. Much of the Bible is historical, and the world has no other records to compare with it, in this respect.

In this volume, likewise, are found the best specimens of biography any where extant. The characters are correctly delineated; excellences are neither overrated nor concealed; faults are explicitly stated and decidedly condemned. The picture is in every case true to the original. Indeed, we are transferred back into the very midst of patriarchal scenes, and are made ourselves to live and move with the venerable men whose lives we peruse, and are permitted to enjoy with them the happiness of primitive simplicity. By attending to the biographical sketches in the Bible, the most instructive lessons are learned respecting human nature. Every where evidence meets us, that man is a fallen being, and that, however numerous and marked his virtues may be, sooner or later proof of his deep depravity will manifest itself. Every page in this impartial history of human nature develops the fact, that man is not what the Creator originally constituted him.

The Scriptures afford examples of preëminent heroism. What human schemes of modern times can be compared with the erection of the ark? See the aged Noah, engaged in that wonderful enterprise. True, it was a divine plan, but the work was performed by the patriarch; behold him toiling; long did he labor amid fierce opposition; the world derided him. Mark the courage of the man — follow him as he enters the ark — contemplate him during his sail of many a month, on the awful flood raised above the tops of the highest moun-

tains. Witness Moses before Pharaoh — Israel passing through the Red Sea — Joshua overcoming the Canaanites — Gideon, with his army of three hundred, utterly routing the numerous hosts of the oppressing Midianites — Samson in his mighty achievements — David meeting Goliath — Daniel disregarding an unrighteous decree, and going into a den of living lions, rather than omit his daily prayers to God. Look at the three men in the fiery furnace, which was heated to an unusual intensity for them, because they would not bow down and worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Behold Peter and John, surrounded by wrathful rulers, and by a populace frantic with rage, because these humble servants of the Lord had, in the name of their master, Jesus, made whole, a man who had been a cripple from his birth. See Stephen, encompassed with an infuriated mob ; Paul, when arraigned before kings and princes, and when contending with unbelieving philosophers, and idolatrous statesmen. In comparison with these and other specimens of heroism, recorded in the Scriptures, the mightiest achievements, described on the pages of profane history, appear almost unworthy of notice.

Our holy book contains numerous passages of overpowering *pathos*. Turn to what passed between Abraham and Isaac, as they journeyed to Mount Moriah. Gen. 22. Read the account of Jacob's meeting Esau, as the former was returning from his long sojourn in Padanaram. Gen. 33. Hear the lament of the same patriarch, as he mourns for his son Joseph, and refuses to be comforted. "I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." Gen. 37. Behold Judah pleading before Joseph, and the latter making himself known to his brethren. "I am Joseph ; doth my father yet live ?" Peruse the farewell address of Moses to the people of Israel. Listen to the gray-headed Samuel, as he takes his leave of the people, to go and render an account of his judgeship to the Judge of all the earth. Give ear to the charge of the dying David,

to his son Solomon, in reference to the kingdom. How pathetic is the following language uttered relative to quite a different interest from that just named : "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate and wept ; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom ! my son, my son Absalom. Would God, I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son !" 2 Sam. 18 : 33. Turn to the same ruler's lament over Saul and Jonathan. "Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle. I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan." 2 Sam. 1. The Psalms furnish many specimens of the pathetic. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God ; when shall I come and appear before God. My tears have been my meat, day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God ?" Ps. 42. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." Ps. 137. One, fond of this species of writing, cannot fail to be interested in the five chapters composing the book of Lamentations. Of Zion it is said, "She weepeth sore in the night, and her tears are on her cheeks. She spreadeth forth her hands, and there is none to comfort her. Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow, like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, where-with the Lord hath afflicted me, in the day of his fierce anger."

Shall I speak of the *sublimity*, characteristic of many portions of the Bible ? The very first announcement which it contains, is truly sublime. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Then a little farther on, we find this wonderful declaration : "God said, Let there be light, and



there was light." How exceedingly sublime is the description of the Lord's descent upon the top of Sinai. Amid thunderings and lightnings, and a thick darkness, he comes attended with the voice of a trumpet, waxing louder and louder. The scene increases in grandeur, till the whole mount quakes at the presence of the wonder-working God. Exodus, 19. In the eighteenth Psalm, we find the following: "He bowed the heavens also and came down, and darkness was under his feet; and he rode upon a cherub and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies. At the brightness that was before him, his thick clouds passed, hailstones and coals of fire." Look at the twenty-fourth Psalm: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." The sixth chapter of Isaiah contains a passage, unsurpassed, perhaps, by any other: "I saw also the Lord, sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it, stood the seraphims; each one had six wings. With twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." I will select but one example more from the Old Testament. It is from the third chapter of Habakkuk, and represents an interposition of the Almighty in behalf of his people. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran; his glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise, and his brightness was as the light. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth; he beheld and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting." With one selection from the New Testament, I pass to the consideration of another



topic. "After these things, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia, salvation, and glory and honor and power unto the Lord our God. And again, they said Alleluia ; and her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying Alleluia ; for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." Rev. 19.

Our sacred book contains a great amount of *poetry*, which is unequalled by uninspired productions. This is affirmed not ignorantly. Homer and Virgil, besides many others, both among the Greeks and the Romans, attained to the highest excellence, and enjoyed the greatest celebrity, as masters of this species of writing. In later times, there have been Milton and Cowper, Thompson and Young, not to name a host of others, of various degrees of skill in the art. All, however, fall far below the sacred poets. True, we do not meet with the exactly measured lines, nor with words that rhyme in the Scriptures. These are not necessary in order to the highest kind of poetical composition, yet the poetry in the Bible seems, in the original, to possess a sort of metrical arrangement. Divinely inspired poetry is not of one species merely. There is the elegiac, also the didactic, the dramatic, the pastoral, and the ode. Examples of this kind of composition are found in various parts of the Scriptures. A poem was sung by the Israelites on getting safely through the Red Sea. It was prepared for the occasion. "The Lord is my strength and song. Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." Another of great beauty is recorded in the fifth chapter of Judges, and is called the song of Deborah and Barak. The occasion of its composition and performance, was the defeat and death of Sisera.

“Praise ye the Lord, for the avenging of Israel. Hear, O ye kings, give ear, O ye princes ; I, even I, will sing unto the Lord, I will sing praise to the Lord God of Israel. The stars in their courses fought against Sisera.” But space would fail me, were I to attempt to give examples from all parts of the Bible. The Book of Job is much of it in poetry ; the Psalms are poetry, and the prophets generally uttered their predictions in verse.

Sufficient has been advanced, respecting the *literary merits* of the Holy Scriptures. The divine pages are by no means uninviting in this respect ; on the contrary, they present on this very account the strongest claims for the regard and study of all, who would be deemed men of literary taste. Still there are more urgent reasons, derived from the contents of the Bible, why it should be searched. Within it, is a system of morality perfect and important. Some of the ancient philosophers spoke well on certain points relating to moral conduct ; yet they were mournfully deficient in their teachings. “The wisest moralists of heathen nations represented the desire for revenge as the mark of a noble mind, and the accomplishment of it as one of the chief felicities attendant on a fortunate man.”\* Christ teaches us, both by precept and example to forgive our enemies. To do it is generous, godlike. Shall we be pointed to that great philosopher and reformer among the Chinese — Confucius ; and to the Persian Zoroaster ; also to the golden verses of Pythagoras, and to the wisdom of Socrates ? Shall we be referred to the writings of Plato, Seneca, and Cicero ? That all these possess some excellences we readily admit. But they are not suitable for standard works on morals, and we cannot consent for a moment to the idea, that the word of God is, in any measure, indebted to

---

\* Jenyns.

them ! As soon would we allow, that the sun derives its light from our tapers, and its heat from our fires. The useful maxims, found in the writings of some of the heathen, were doubtless derived either directly or indirectly from the Scriptures, much of which was early scattered far and wide. In the system of ethics, delivered to man by his Maker, and contained in the Bible, every moral precept, founded on reason, is carried to a higher degree of perfection, than it is by any of the ancient philosophers ; while all the precepts, founded upon false principles, are entirely omitted, and a multitude of precepts, unknown where Christianity has shed no light, are added.\*

In vain shall we search through all the schools of heathen philosophy, whether they be Platonic, Aristotelian or Eclectic, for any thing like the pure code of morals propounded by our holy religion. Never was an attempt more futile, than is the one which is sometimes made, to convince believers in the Scriptures,<sup>7</sup> that the writings of the New Testament were culled from the teachings of Gentile idolators.

“ Let all the heathen writers join  
To form one perfect book,  
Great God, when once compared with thine,  
How mean their writings look.”

No sooner had the doctrines of the Bible become intermixed with the precepts and speculations of heathen philosophy, than Christianity became corrupt. The horrible system of Antichrist is a legitimate result of such a combination.

But we proceed to another point, and observe, that the Scriptures embody the laws by which Jehovah governs the moral world, and regulates the intelligent universe. Blot out

---

\* See Jenyns.

of existence this volume, and man is left in darkness, as to what the Lord would have him to do. Since the revolution occasioned by the introduction of sin, conscience is not sufficient to be the only guide ; amid the uproar of the passions, her voice is often not heard, and when heard not heeded. The law on the heart, and the laws written in the constitution of nature, have invariably proved inadequate for the guidance of man. Wherever the Bible is not received and searched, there you find man ignorant of his Maker, a grovelling sensualist, or an ignorant idolator, or a stupid atheist.

Let me now approach another point, in respect to the contents of the Bible, which presents an argument stronger than any of the preceding, why this book should be faithfully explored, and its teachings most scrupulously regarded. I refer to the history of redemption. Here, and only here, is a Saviour promised. No where else is the voice of the prophets heard, proclaiming a Messiah to come. In this book, he is not only promised, and his appearance often predicted, but we actually find the history of his advent, life and death, here written out in full. The problem is solved in the Bible, which no heathen could ever solve. The wisest of them doubted whether the Deity could forgive sins. In the Scriptures we are shown, how God can be just, yet justify the penitent sinner. On the cross of Calvary was made an atonement, which renders it possible for Jehovah to maintain his law, and at the same time to have mercy upon the transgressor, who acknowledges his guilt, and seeks pardon.

Before leaving this branch of the subject, it may be proper to notice another characteristic in the contents of the Bible. This book corrects all the wild notions and foolish schemes which the depraved heart, the unsubdued will, and unbridled imagination indulge and attempt. It shows us Babel-builders confounded ; heaven-daring plans defeated ; the defiers of God struck lifeless ; the pride of man humbled ; and every thing



that exalteth itself against God cast down. We are taught to number our days and to apply our hearts to wisdom ; not to boast of to-morrow, and to employ the present day for the wisest and best of all purposes. He is shown to be a fool who lays up much goods for many years, and makes no calculation upon a sudden arrest by death. It is a scriptural sentiment, that he who does not build upon the Rock of ages, is a foolish man ; and that he who does not aspire after immortal felicities, is unwise and condemns his soul to everlasting sorrow. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and whoever casts off this fear, is not wise. In a word, the holy Writings teach us how to live and how to die. They are a perfect rule of faith and of practice for every member of the human family.

#### MANNER OF SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES.

Having presented sufficient reasons why the Scriptures should be searched, I shall direct attention to the manner in which this important service ought to be performed.

##### *The Temper of Mind.*

We should come to the lively oracles with a modest estimate of our intellectual powers, being sensible that God is infinite in wisdom and knowledge, and that we know comparatively nothing. Exalted views of one's own mental capacities, is a great barrier to entering the chambers of Bible truth. He that supposes himself to be in possession of more light than God has it in his power to give, is not in a fit state to search the Scriptures. Such a person is disposed to assume the attitude of a teacher in the presence of the Most High, instead of applying himself to the divine word. If a proper degree of humility characterize an individual, he is ready to hear attentively what the Lord has to say ; destitute of that virtue, he



may regard every message from on high, which does not fall in with his own opinions, as obtrusive. A proud, self-conceited mortal, is not in a frame of mind adapted to a suitable application to the inspired pages. Lay aside, therefore, your conceitedness, all ye who would learn the will of God. Remember that on every point treated in his Revelation, you need just the instruction which his book contains. Possessing due meekness, you will be met in your approach to it, with divine approbation; while those destitute of this trait, shall be left in the darkness of their own beclouded minds, to embrace delusions and perish in their folly. Here I affirm it to be an unquestionable fact, that not one of all the rejecters of the Bible ever sought to understand its teaching, with any thing like a becoming temper of mind. Some of them have made statements which prove the truth of the above assertion in respect to them. Not a few, who have undertaken to write down the Scriptures, have betrayed an utter ignorance of the import of the volume, and all of them have exhibited more of a fiendish hate against the Bible, than of a painful conviction that it is unworthy of confidence. An instance has never been found, of an individual coming *meekly* to the conclusion, that the Bible merits universal contempt, and such an event cannot occur. No intelligent man ever humbly seeks to know the facts respecting the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the Scriptures, without arriving at the conviction, that they are the infallible word of the Lord. I conclude this topic by simply saying, that the importance of possessing the temper of mind under consideration, cannot be too highly estimated.

*The Province of Reason.*

Reason must occupy its appropriate province, and it is an urgent question, what is that province? Evidently it has some office; man is a rational creature, and is required, on

every occasion, to show himself such. God does not desire us to act without reason, but calls upon us to prove ourselves under its influence at all times. The truths of the Bible certainly cannot be contrary to right reason, for they are from God, and he is never inconsistent with himself. If on any points the Scriptures and reason are actually at variance, the wrong is on the side of the latter; it is perverted. Revelation may, in numerous particulars, be above reason, without being contrary to it. Instruction given to man by inspiration, comes to us, in certain respects, like the rays of the sun. Of the latter, we see only the mere extremities of the pencils of light from nature's great luminary. These reach the eye, and extend back to the source, whence they proceed. The same may be affirmed of the contents of the Bible. Every truth within it reaches unto the throne of God. We may walk in the light of the sun, and receive those benefits, which it is adapted to confer, without understanding the nature of a single ray; without knowing whether the sun be in its nature solid or gaseous, a ball of fire, or a globe of ice. The Scriptures were given to us, to be a guide, a revelation, a blessing, but it does not hence follow, that we are able to comprehend the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths of all that is said or implied in them. Man cannot fathom eternity; he cannot penetrate the undisclosed counsels of the Most High. Created beings, however great their capacities, must forever fall infinitely short of the knowledge possessed by Jehovah.

The province of reason is, to explore the treasures of truth, which Divine Wisdom has placed within its reach. It has no right to sit in judgment on the propriety of this or that communication from above. Reason is not called upon to decide what the Bible should or should not contain. The only question for it to answer, is, what does this book contain? Its proper position is that of an investigator. Nor may the so-called discoveries in science, be allowed to turn the scale in

which are weighed the chapters and the verses of the book sent from heaven. We fear not the developments of true science. The Author of Revelation is the Creator of the world ; hence the book of nature and the inspired page can never be at war. But be it known, that we are not to interpret the latter by the former. To the law and to the testimony, the final appeal is to be made, in every case of doubt. The Bible is complete in itself ; though the Most High, in preparing it, well knew, that those to be its recipients were in the midst of the works and wonders of his hand, and that they might learn many a lesson from them. What has natural science to do with the facts relating to the Trinity, the incarnation, the atonement, the resurrection of the dead, and the future judgment ? These are themes which science cannot touch. They are let down direct from heaven, and are to be received wholly on the authority of God, as presented in the Bible.

*A Prayerful Frame of Mind is requisite.*

In searching the Scriptures, the mind should be preëminently and perpetually in a prayerful frame. The heart, as I have elsewhere stated, has much to do in understanding the inspired volume. But little progress can be made in seeking after its precious pearls, while the feelings are opposed to its contents. Sin darkens the eye of the mind ; it blurs the whole spiritual vision. Besides, when one's heart is armed against divine doctrines, he will not apply himself diligently and meekly to ascertain what the Lord saith. None, except a devout frame of mind, is suited to receive the pure teachings of the Spirit. Moreover, man at best, is of limited capacities, and needs constantly the illuminating and enlarging influence of the Holy Ghost. Still farther, without the special guidance of the third person in the Trinity, he will ever be likely to do,

what multitudes have done, wrest the Scriptures to his own destruction. Therefore, the first object to be sought by every one, who would become thoroughly versed in all which Jehovah has been pleased to reveal, is regenerating and sanctifying grace. Ah, the rashness of those that attempt to *unfold* to others, the mysteries of Revelation, without having become acquainted with their own hearts. Such certainly are blind, and surely none but the blind will submit to be led by them. One had better spread his sails, and launch out upon the wide sea of infidelity, than to undertake to explain, as a teacher of Christianity, the oracles of God, while he cherishes a heart that hates the light, and will not come to the light, lest his deeds be reproved. Let the following prayers of the Psalmist be unceasingly offered by all, who would acquaint themselves with the truths stored in the Bible: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. Teach me thy statutes. O let me not wander from thy commandments." Thus shall our holy book become to them a continual and sure guide in their pathway from time to eternity.

### *Closing Appeals.*

Before concluding this discussion, I must appeal,

1. To the young. For you, Almighty God prepared this sacred volume. Here are truths and treasures, more important for you than aught the world elsewhere contains. Whatever other knowledge you have acquired, if destitute of a thorough acquaintance with this book, you are profoundly and fearfully ignorant. One cannot begin to be wise, till he seeks wisdom from the Bible. The science of religion is the greatest science of the world, and the art of living for God is of all arts the noblest. You must enter the arcana of divine truth, or be marked as miserably defective in mental culture. Here are themes, furnished by the Lord of the universe, for the



contemplation of his rational creatures. Have you thought it beneath the dignity of your nature, to commune with this book of God? It would be not less beneath that dignity to commune with Jehovah in person. Would it mortify you to be seen in the Sabbath School class, or in the weekly gathering for social converse upon the Scriptures? Then have you strange ideas of dignity. Doubtless you would blush to be seen sitting with angels and archangels. Brush away for once the dust from your eyes, and gaze upon the *intellectual* beauties of the Bible. Show now yourself a youth of mind. Here is history, biography, poetry, eloquence, pathos, sublimity. Here is all that is truly elevating and saving. Were death a wakeless sleep, the Bible, considering its literary merits, might demand your best attention, your choicest hours of study. But you are to exist forever; and upon your treatment of the Scriptures, depends the character of your future condition. Despise them, and you are lost. Neglect of his word is neglect of God. Come, ye youth, and hold communion with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, through the medium of these inspired pages, that the blessing of the Triune Jehovah may rest upon you forever.

2. Not less is the Bible fitted to the circumstances of the middle-aged. They surely have not become too wise for Omniscience to instruct them, nor so holy as to need no more of the sanctifying influences, coming from the Spirit through the word. Verily, they have not arrived at that degree of perfection in the art of living for immortality, that renders unnecessary farther counsel from God. As yet they may receive good in all the relations which they occupy, by drinking at this fount of living waters; by eating of the manna here provided, and by conforming to the instructions here given. O ye men of strength, here is strong food for your undying souls. Spurn not the heavenly entertainment.

3. And have the aged gone too far in their journey toward



the grave, to spend any more time in searching the Scriptures? Or have they so entirely mastered every part of this epistle of the infinite Father, that no more information can be gained from it? Are they too old to explore the field of revealed truth? So stricken in years, that they can no more grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? If this be a fact, then are they too old to enter heaven; for these identical truths found in the Scriptures, will be the theme of contemplation for God's elect, till the last sand in the hour-glass of eternity shall have run out. All ye aged, standing hard by the lashing surges of death's dark waters, fail not to search the Scriptures. Wipe the dust from your eye-glasses, and hold daily converse with the Almighty, in the book sent in mercy to you.

#### THE ANCIENT SAINTS AND A FUTURE STATE.

In the term *ancient saints*, I here include all the pious who lived prior to the coming of Christ, and of whom we have some account in the Old Testament. There may have been many others; but concerning them we have no information. They believed in future existence. Evidence that such was the fact is furnished both by reason and by revelation.

Our first parents were created adult, rational and intelligent beings. In no particular were they children. They seem to have been intimate with their Creator, conversing freely with him, and enjoying a degree of familiarity, in this respect, not known by any of their posterity. Furthermore, they were holy and happy, probably, without the thought that either their holiness or happiness would ever terminate. They could have had no idea of death, but must have expected to exist forever, either on earth or elsewhere, and the death threatened as penalty for transgression, did not imply annihilation. Hence when they fell under this condemning sentence, "In the day

that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," they had no thought of ceasing to exist, in consequence of their disobedience. Their physical natures then became mortal, but their souls remained immortal. A Saviour was promised. Whatever may have been the penalty for their sin, in him provision was made for its removal. It was, however, no consequence of transgression, that man should some time cease to exist. On the other hand, he was sentenced to an existence of eternal misery, and the promise that a Saviour should come, was an indication of deliverance from such a doom, and not deliverance from annihilation. Were our first parents forgiven, as is generally supposed, the announcement to them of their pardon was a guarantee of endless life, even if, in an unpardoned state, they had been adjudged to non-existence. In a word, the first pair must have believed in future existence, when they were innocent, when the slaves of sin, and when restored to divine favor; nor would they fail, during the hundreds of years of their earthly sojourn, to converse with their children and children's children, on this important theme. Adam lived till within about one hundred and thirty years of Noah, and through all that long period, he, of course, believed in a future state. Though the great proportion in the first centuries became notoriously wicked, some were remarkably pious. In that period lived the godly Enoch, who was translated on account of his holy life; or rather being ripe for removal, the Lord took him, body and soul, to heaven, that the event might impress upon the minds of all in that age, the fact of future existence. The method of communication between God and his people, in early times, was adapted to afford an opportunity for acquiring clear views respecting *any point* in which they felt an interest. And what question more deeply concerns a rational being than this — Am I to exist after I finish my pilgrimage on earth? We can conceive of no subject which would awaken deeper solici-

tude in the mind of Abraham. Enjoying a familiarity of converse with the Most High, surely he would leave unasked no necessary question, relating to the future, till the darkness should be dispelled from his mind.

Again : it is most unreasonable to suppose that God would fail to *instruct* his people on a point so essential to their well-being. The supposition that Abraham, or that *any* of the pious, in the times to which I refer, were left in doubt concerning the fact of future existence, is derogatory to the character of their Maker. Were the Scriptures entirely silent on this matter, their silence would be no evidence that any of the ancient saints did not believe in future existence. We might as reasonably conclude that the sun did not rise during those far off years, because the *fact* of its rising is not frequently recorded, as to infer from the silence of the Scriptures, (on the supposition that they are silent respecting this or that particular,) the want of a belief touching such particulars, on the part of those who lived in the most distant periods of the world.

Why is that desperate effort made, which we not unfrequently witness, to prove that the progenitors of our race were ignorant, foolish creatures ? Why are men so anxious to believe that the patriarchs and prophets were short-sighted, stupid beings, whose thoughts never went beyond the limits of the present life. The idea of future existence is inwrought in the constitution of man. Probably no human being expects to become extinct at death. Some endeavor to persuade themselves, that the grave will conceal them forever ; yet the struggles in the minds of such men are presumptive grounds for believing in a future existence. Philosophers may speculate and lose themselves in the mists of their speculations ; but the unsophisticated, yea, those whose only education is the light of nature, *feel*, if they do not believe, that there is something within themselves which survives the dissolution of the body.

The men of the first generations were doubtless quite as familiar with analogies of nature as we are. As previously intimated, among them much important and correct tradition was handed down from family to family; and all who lived in the early ages were but little removed from the birthday of the world. Though, *practically*, the great majority of the people may have been atheists, theoretically they could not have been atheists; though, *practically*, they lived as if there were no future state, yet they must have believed in the reality of a future state, for the very circumstances in which they dwelt would not permit them to disbelieve it.

Will any deny the existence of genuine faith in the world's youthful period? But to speak of faith as existing in ancient times, and yet to intimate that there was in those exercising it no expectation of existence after death, is attaching an import to the term which we cannot understand. Faith always *pierces* the sky; always goes up to God, and casts an anchor within the vail, sure and steadfast; it takes the heart to heaven. Were there a pious man before the time of our Saviour, how *could* he doubt the fact of a future existence?

Let us turn to the holy records, and ascertain what the *impression* is which they make upon our minds, in reference to the correctness of the conclusion derived from reason. Do they affirm but little? There was need of but little being affirmed. Is it any where stated in the Old Testament, that the ancient pious *did not* believe in a future existence? Can a chapter be pointed out, in which this sentiment is expressed? Or is it any where clearly intimated? Should it, however, be seriously objected, that the existence of such a belief is not explicitly taught? Suppose we admit the objection, what must be the inference? That such a belief was not common? No; rather that it was *so common*, that special mention of it was not necessary. *It is every where implied.* We cannot read understandingly a page in the Old Testament, without



perceiving that the current of divine truth runs deeper than the surface of things. Every verse, taken in its *connections and bearings*, has manifest reference to a future state. Men are in all parts of the law and the prophets spoken of as accountable, and on probation. Now *probation implies retribution*. As the whole of this life is represented as a scene of probation, retribution must take place subsequently. If there be future retribution, there must also be future existence.

Allusion has been made to the intimacy which existed in ancient times between the pious and Jehovah. If I mistake not, the Scriptures speak just as if those persons who held communion with God, as much believed in their own future existence, as in the present existence of that Being with whom they conversed.

Further: angels, as the Bible informs us, frequently appeared on earth in the form of men. These heavenly messengers left indubitable proof that they came from above, and the manner in which the sacred writers describe the interviews of these visitants is adapted to make the impression, that angels possess visible forms, that they exist in heaven, that their natures are so much like the nature of man, that the latter may be readily accommodated to the residence of the former. To me it seems, that each appearance of an angel must have produced on the mind of him who saw the angel, the most vivid, deep and abiding impression of the reality of another state of existence for *human* beings. Look at the case of Jacob. He saw, in vision, a ladder, extending from earth to heaven, on which the angels were ascending and descending. Could he have witnessed that scene, and not have believed himself destined to the abode of these holy beings, provided his faith in God should be strong to the end of his pilgrimage?

Again: the wonderful providences with which inspiration assures us that the ancient saints were familiar, were suited to teach them, that it is not the whole of life to breathe for a



while in time, nor is it all of death to expire. I might dwell upon the circumstances connected with the flood; with the destruction of the four cities, and with other awful visitations from above. There certainly is nothing in the threatenings connected with these events, and nothing in the manner of executing the threatenings, as the transactions are recorded in the Scriptures, which intimates that those cut off were annihilated; but the righteous, in such cases, who were spared, must have felt that *hell* had overwhelmed the wicked, swept away by judgments. Moreover, the instruction which the religious teachers in Old Testament times were required to impart, had a meaning far-reaching. The rites, also, that were instituted by the command of the Most High, may be appropriately introduced here. They evidently looked beyond the limits of earthly existence; the priests conversed with him who dwelleth between the cherubim.

As another consideration, bearing upon the same point, namely, the *impression* the Scriptures make touching the views of the ancient saints, we may refer to their *language* when speaking of life. Evidently they regarded themselves as only beginning existence in time, and looked upon themselves as pilgrims, who were passing from one country to another. When they spake of death, it was not in a style which the atheist employs. The doctrine of a resurrection was beyond a doubt held by them. Even Job, whose language sometimes, it is thought, seems to favor the idea that there will be no coming up from the grave, declares in terms too definite to be questioned, his belief in a future resurrection. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another." The Psalmist speaks of awaking in the likeness of God. Daniel declares that the sleepers in the dust shall

awake. Numerous are the figures in the Old Testament, which *must* be regarded as almost, if not quite without a meaning, if the doctrines of a future existence and a *literal resurrection*, were not common to the ancient pious. And why the difference of language to set forth the death of the righteous and of the wicked, if both were to perish alike in the grave? We are assured in this part of the Scriptures that there will be a review of all which human beings do, say and think. "Know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." When and where will he do it? Certainly after death, and in eternity.

Finally : the New Testament certifies that the saints of the first dispensation did believe in a state of future existence. Having specified a number, and intimating that others not named were the same in faith with those specified, an apostle tells us, that they did not receive on earth what God had promised as a reward of their fidelity, but that they expected it in a future state. They desired a better country, and therefore the Lord was not ashamed to be called their God, but had prepared for them a city. They expected to be happy after death. It follows, of course, that this position is true, if the one first taken be in accordance with fact ; for if those saints expected to exist after the dissolution of the body, they expected to be happy or unhappy. But they could not expect to be unhappy, for they were to exist in the enjoyment of God. The idea that death must terminate the period of the divine favor to them, when it would not interfere with their continued existence, could not have entered their minds ; at least, could not have continued there. Was the Saviour revealed to our first parents? Then, certainly, they were made acquainted with heavenly felicity. Christ is no Saviour, if he do not elevate the soul to heaven. The pardoned ever aspire after an abode of uninterrupted tranquillity. How can it be intimated that Adam and Eve enjoyed the blessings secured by faith in

a Redeemer, as promised, if they did not receive antepasts of endless blessedness, and if those antepasts were not to them the harbingers of their subsequent actual admission into heaven? Surely they were not restored to the happiness of a terrestrial paradise. Far from such a state was their sojourn on earth. Their first son became the murderer of the second; and, through all the long period of their earthly pilgrimage, they were witnesses of scenes which must have chilled their blood. What, they might have asked, avails our assurance of acceptance through a Mediator, if all we receive from him is limited to the present state of existence, and this is such a scene of uninterrupted sorrow? Indeed, as has been intimated, we can form no conception of genuine faith, which does not carry the soul prospectively to the throne of God, and fasten it at once there with the anchor of hope.

But we need not speculate, since the Bible is specific. Noah was a preacher of righteousness. The fact is stated by inspiration. If that patriarch were a preacher of righteousness, he explained the rewards of the righteous, and pointed to the approaching flood as the harbinger of eternal wrath. Before his time, Enoch lived and walked with God. This fact is recorded in the Scriptures. He was translated. Did not that pious man *know*, when walking with his Maker, that his holy life on earth would be followed by the enjoyment of heaven? Abraham understood as well as Paul, that the righteous cannot be condemned with the wicked. In pleading for Sodom, he says, "that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee; shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Jesus testified that this patriarch had a view of Messianic times. Now, if the father of the faithful saw in vision Christ, did he not also see salvation through him? Did not that eminent saint himself exercise saving faith, and does not such faith bring assurance of eternal life? Besides, in the promise of an earthly Canaan, is most evidently implied the prospect

of a heavenly country. It is asserted in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The conduct of Moses evinces his expectation of happiness hereafter. He chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of Jehovah than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, because he had respect unto the recompense of reward. The writer of the sixteenth Psalm, addressing the Most High, says, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life. In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand, there are pleasures forevermore." It matters not whether we regard him as expressing his own feelings, or speaking in prophecy the sentiments of the Messiah. In another place the Psalmist says, "I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Ps. 17: 19. Isaiah was commanded to speak thus: "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings;" but when and where, if not in a future state? Daniel asserts, that some of the dead shall awake to everlasting life; also, that the wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever. The great truths of the gospel are more fully brought out under the latter dispensation than they were in the former. But when God began to make known any thing to man by special revelation, future endless existence was one of the first points settled. The hopes and fears, the joys and the anticipations of patriarchs and prophets, corresponded with those felt by the pious, in later times; the Bible reveals but one faith of saints.

They believe in the endless misery of the wicked. If the two foregoing positions are sustained, the truth of this follows, for the saints of old could not believe in the future existence of all men, and in the eternal happiness of the righteous, without at the same time believing in the everlasting punishment of the wicked. If holiness be a passport into heaven, the want of



it will be the occasion of exclusion from heaven. If it be well with the righteous, *because* they are righteous, it must be ill with the wicked, *because* they are wicked. I would ask how can the distinction between the holy and the unholy be more clearly stated than it is in the Old Testament? Is not the language employed in announcing the divine threatenings, incapable of limitation to the present life? Examine the decalogue. Are not the penalties annexed to the precepts, far-reaching? Must not violation always have been attended with the most fearful peril? Can a different opinion be rationally formed? Turn over all the pages that were written by inspiration prior to the coming of Christ, what do they say concerning the end of the vile? "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup." "Some shall wake to shame and everlasting contempt." "Woe unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Many other passages might be adduced of like character, and no exegesis of them which develops their meaning, *limits* that meaning to the present state of existence.

### *A Concluding Remark.*

I have appended the foregoing *suggestions*, in respect to the ancient saints and a future state, to what I have said relative to the Scriptures, because the sentiments which we entertain on this subject, influence us in our estimate of the Old Testament. Often have my sensibilities been shocked at what even good men have advanced in their comments upon the faith of the patriarchs and prophets. I do not claim to have *demonstrated* my positions. An attempt at direct argumentation in their support would seem much like trying to prove the exist-



ence of the sun, moon and stars. We have a right, nay, we are morally bound, to assume each of *the three positions as true*. Otherwise we make the Almighty to appear but little better than an infinite trifler, in his dealings with the world, before the advent of Christ. Too frequently have interpreters of the earliest Scriptures reasoned from false premises.

### INFIDELS.

Persons professing to believe in a Supreme Being, but denying, at the same time, the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, are denominated *infidels*. They are classed, likewise, under the titles *deists* and *theists*, which terms are of like import, designating those who believe in the existence of one God, in opposition to atheists. The name deist, in modern times, is said to have been first assumed as the denomination of a party about the middle of the sixteenth century, by some persons "in France and Italy, who were desirous of thus disguising their opposition to Christianity, by a more honorable appellation than that of atheists."\* An attempt was made in the seventeenth century to reduce deism to a system; the sufficiency of reason and natural religion was affirmed, and the doctrine of a special revelation was rejected as unnecessary and superfluous. Deists have been divided into different classes, according to the *specific* views which they have advocated. "We are well aware of the diversity of complexion which infidelity puts on."†

An infidel does not *necessarily* regard the Bible as of bad tendency, nor the accounts therein contained as false. He may consider the chief facts as having occurred, though he

---

\* Buck's Theol. Dict., Art. Deists.

† Chalmers.

must exclude the idea of any thing miraculous in their occurrence. Celsus, who wrote in the latter part of the second century, ascribed the wonders in the Scriptures to magic art. Some infidels in past times, and also some at the present day, employ strong expressions when speaking of the excellency of the Scriptures. Lord Herbert, one of the class, who wrote in the former part of the seventeenth century, styled Christianity "*the best religion*," and Lord Bolingbroke, another of them, said, that it is a benevolent system, and that its morals are pure.

False sentiments in religion have no fixed points, no immovable pillars. The advocates of error are always afloat; they sail without a chart, or a compass, or a polar star, or a pilot; hence their course is crooked; in every movement they betray bewilderment and ignorance. They can and they do yield to the promptings of passion, and rush onward at its bidding, knowing not and seemingly caring not, whither they are impelled.

Theoretically, atheism and infidelity are diverse systems; practically, however, they are one. "Nor is there any other alternative left, than the belief of Christianity, or absolute atheism." It has been truly said, that "a man seldom retains for any length of time, his first deistical opinions; his errors gradually multiply, till he sinks to the last gradation of impiety." A despiser of divine truth has himself declared, "that no person remains a deist, but through want of reflection, timidity, passion, or obstinacy." Chalmers observes, that, "viewed purely as an intellectual subject, we look upon the mind of the atheist as in a better state of preparation for the proofs of Christianity, than the mind of the deist."

In attempting to exhibit infidelity, I shall, doubtless, occasionally identify it with atheism, though the latter has been already distinctly noticed in a preceding part of this volume. In the presentation now to be made, there can scarcely be a

better classification than that embraced in the following passage of Scripture. "They are corrupt; they have done abominable works; there is none that doeth good."

*They are corrupt.*

Infidelity can have no permanent lodgment in a pure mind. Frankly was it acknowledged by Lord Rochester, that "the source and spring of his unbelief was a space of five years spent in profligacy." Truth is the natural element of the intellect; the soul of man aspires after eternal existence, and of course desires information concerning its own future destiny. Said a heathen, "he will be the true priest, who can confer immortality." The strongest intellects amid pagan darkness have sighed for the breaking forth of that very light which shines upon us from that sacred volume which the true God has given to the human family. It is not possible for proof to be more clear, than is that which supports the claim of the Scriptures to be a boon from heaven. "Revelation, so far as truth and reason can prevail, is on all sides triumphant." Every objection urged against it has been manfully met and logically refuted. There is not an infidel on the earth who would not be convinced of the divinity of Christianity were he to consult, candidly, its credentials. Mankind may be challenged to show an instance, in which, after a faithful investigation of evidence in support of the Bible, unbelief in regard to its claims has still prevailed. Of multitudes, may be affirmed as a fact, what one confessed in respect to himself, that he had read all the works of infidels, but none of those written by Christians. Wherefore is it thus? Why do men wilfully reject the oracles of God? As already intimated, we need special illumination from above. Nature alone does not instruct us sufficiently. She cannot send a single ray of light across the river of death. Ah, she leaves us as we begin to

descend its bank ! Neither a Socrates, nor a Cicero, with all his mental endowments and anxious search for some data on which to found a belief in future existence and blessedness, could tell what awaits a human being after death. More stupid than a brute is he, who does not perceive the adaptedness of the sacred volume to man's mental and moral state. The discarding of this book, is attributable wholly to the *depravity* of the infidel. He is corrupt, and therefore he does not acknowledge the Scriptures. "Unbelief springs purely from evil in the heart," and not from "perplexity in the head." Purify the affections, and divine communications will readily be welcomed. It has been well said, that "truth was not made for the benefit of infidels, who are its foes, but for willing apprehensions." Strange expectation would that be which should look for a revelation from a God of perfect purity, of such a nature as to be acceptable to the unholy. Infidels must be, from the nature of the case, opposed to the Bible, so long as they cherish their depravity. Their hearts are diseased, and the venom thereof pours itself out through every avenue of their souls, and darts up into the face of high heaven.

Infidels *are corrupt*. They are to be found only where Christianity has obtained a firm footing. Polytheists and atheists can exist in those countries not favored with the light of a special revelation ; but infidels are those who disbelieve the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the divine origin of the religion founded on them. It is an unquestionable fact, that all good society depends for its commencement and continuance upon the prevalence of the influence which goes out from the Bible. Furthermore, it is also a fact equally attested, that infidelity is arrayed against just this state of society. "To obliterate the sense of Deity, of moral sanctions, and a future world, and by these means to prepare the way for the total subversion of every institution, both social and re-

ligious, which men have been accustomed to revere, is evidently the principal object of modern sceptics." The same writer further observes, that "the immaculate holiness of the divine volume is precisely that which renders it disgusting to men who are determined, at all events, to retain their vices." The Scriptures are rejected simply for the reason that darkness is loved rather than that spiritual illumination, which they richly furnish. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

On two great institutions does the welfare of civil society very much depend. They are the *Sabbath* and *Marriage*. With these, infidels are actively and perseveringly at war. Such barriers to vice they strive to demolish; and once, in a certain country, where their principles gained the ascendancy, they effected temporarily their design. Yes, the thing was done in France. The Sabbath, by a national decree, was abolished, the Bible was publicly burned, and on the grave-yards was inscribed this appalling sentence, "Death is an eternal sleep." Nor did their infamous proceedings stop there. "A vile woman, dressed as the Goddess of Reason, was publicly embraced by the presiding officer of the National Legislature, and conducted by him to a magnificent car, and followed by immense crowds to the grand cathedral of Notre Dame, where she was seated on an altar, and there received the worship of the multitudes." \*

Lord Herbert, a noted infidel, held, "that the indulgence of lust and anger was no more to be blamed than the thirst occasioned by the dropsy, or the drowsiness produced by lethargy." Woolston, another of the same school, was a gross blasphemer. It is recorded of Blount, that he solicited his sister-in-law to

---

\* See the work, "Duty of American Women to their Country."



marry him, and on being refused, shot himself. Hobbes asserted, "that every man has a right to all things, and may *lawfully* get them if he can." It is evident that Morgan had no regard to truth. Bolingbroke taught, that "the chief end of man is to gratify the appetites and inclinations of the flesh ; that modesty is inspired by mere prejudice ; that polygamy is a part of the law or religion of nature. Hume said, "that adultery *must* be practised, if men would obtain all the advantages of life ; that, if generally practised, it would in time cease to be scandalous ; and that, if practised secretly and frequently, it would, by degrees, come to be thought no crime at all." Tindal changed his religion merely to suit the times, and was infamous for vice. Voltaire and Helvetius both advocated the unlimited gratification of the sensual appetites. Of the former of these it is said, "Impiety received him as he left the cradle." Rousseau was, according to his own "*Confessions*," a thief, a liar, and a debauched profligate. This man had a habit of lying on all occasions, whether moved by fear to conceal his misconduct, or incited by an appetite he wished to gratify, or actuated by some other equally sordid motive. A strong disposition to thieving was likewise among his propensities. Self-indulgence was his rule, self-restraint his abhorrence. He lived twenty-five years with an ignorant woman without being married to her, and sent her children, one after another, to the Foundling Hospital, regardless of the mother's tears. \*

Thomas Paine was a miserable drunkard, during that period of his life in which he was engaged preparing the second part of his "*Age of Reason*." Having separated from his own wife, he brought with him from France that of another man. "His disgusting vices, his intemperance, and profligacy, and

---

\* See Life of Rousseau, by Brougham. For some of the preceding facts, the reader may consult Horne's Introduction, Vol. I., first part.

irreligion, made him an outcast from all respectable society.”\* As this man is the boast of infidels in our country, it is proper to give rather a particular account of him. He was born in England, and there he held, for a while, “a place in the excise, but was dismissed for irregularity. Unable to get employment where he was known, he came to this country, commenced politician, and pretended to some faith in Christianity. Congress gave him an office, from which, being soon found guilty of a breach of trust, he was expelled with disgrace. The French revolution allured him to France. Habits of intoxication made him a disagreeable inmate in the house of the American minister, where, out of compassion, he had been received as a guest. *During all this time, his life was a compound of ingratitude and perfidy, of hypocrisy and avarice, of lewdness and adultery.* His first wife is said to have died of ill usage; his second was rendered so miserable by neglect and unkindness, that they separated by mutual agreement; his third *companion*, not his wife, was the victim of his seduction, while he lived upon the hospitality of her husband.”

A lady, in whose house Paine lived awhile in New York, states that he was daily intoxicated, and that, in his few moments of soberness, he was always quarrelling with herself, and disturbing the peace of her family. “*He was deliberately and disgustingly filthy.* For a servant, he had an old black woman, as drunken as her master. They would both wallow together on the floor, *swearing, and threatening to fight, but being unable through intoxication to make an attack.* Removing from one family to another, he would pay for his board only when forced to do it. Such was the author of the *Age of Reason*; such the apostle of mob infidelity.” This was the

---

\* Allen's Biog. Dict.

an whose birthday the haters of our holy religion celebrate.\* Ribbon exhibited the "most heartless and sordid selfishness." The foregoing were not very remarkable specimens of infidels. Sentiments like the above characterize the writings of this class in all countries where they dwell.

One of the most active infidels with whom I have been acquainted, has published pamphlets expressly to promote immorality. An infidel known to the writer years since, was *characterized* by impurity of life. Of the whole brotherhood, it may truly be affirmed, "They are altogether become filthy," being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity." Such is the testimony of inspiration, and observation confirms it. "There never has been among them a single good or virtuous man." † — "Under every possible aspect in which infidelity can be viewed, it extends the domain of sensuality." ‡

*They have done abominable Works.*

In this we should not be surprised. Grapes are not gathered from thorns, nor figs from thistles. A bad tree does not produce good fruit, nor an impure fountain send forth clear streams. Infidelity is a school of iniquity. Its disciples are all taught to do evil, and they all furnish proof of an aptness to learn. To all the graduates of its institutions may be addressed the impressive words of inspiration: "Your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness."

With a design to wage war against all virtue, and as a natu-

\* See the Christian Spectator, Vol. V., pp. 141, 142.

† Dr. Dwight.

‡ Robert Hall.

ral result of their destitution of correct principles, they have endeavored to destroy moral distinctions. "If we consider the nature and effects of infidelity, we shall find that it subverts the whole foundation of morals." We may perceive, where it prevails, a "frightful contrast of dwarfish virtues and gigantic vices." Its abettors call evil good, and darkness light. "That the civil or municipal law is the only foundation of right and wrong; that, where there is no law, every man's judgment is the only standard of right and wrong; that the sovereign is not bound by any obligation of truth and justice, and can do no wrong to his subjects," were doctrines of Hobbes. All morality was resolved by Bolingbroke into self-love as its principle. He maintained "that ambition, the lust of power, sensuality, and avarice, may be *lawfully* gratified, if they can be safely." Self-denial, self-mortification, and humility, are not virtues according to Hume. He defended the propriety of hypocrisy and of suicide. "The idea of moral obligation was exploded among the infidel clubs in France," just before the *revolution*. "A diligent aim at *confounding virtue and vice*, levelling the demarkations of morality, laughing at the usual reserves and decencies of life," are characteristic of all these *blots* upon creation.

*In furtherance of their direful purposes, Infidels have, to the utmost of their ability, corrupted the Literature of the World.*

A writer of extensive acquaintance with talented authors, says, that "a considerable proportion of those who pursue literature as a profession, may be justly considered as the open or disguised abettors of atheism." The poison is infused into all the fruits of their pens. "We charge them with a measure of *impurity* and *licentiousness* which has no parallel except in the grossest productions of heathen Greece and

Rome." \* At the present day, infidel writers of small ability are flooding the earth with polluting pamphlets. Corrupting sheets, the number of which is numberless, the offspring of their vileness, are literally filling the world. The system has lost, of late, that seeming dignity which it once pompously assumed, and nothing now is too low for it to attempt. "Bred in the speculations of a daring philosophy, immured at first in the cloisters of the learned, and afterwards nursed in the lap of voluptuousness and of courts; having at length reached its full maturity, it boldly ventures to challenge the suffrages of the people, solicits the acquaintance of peasants and mechanics, and seeks to draw whole nations to its standard." †

*Again: the Facts of Christianity are grossly perverted by Infidels.*

Nothing of candor and fairness can be found in their attempts to destroy the arguments by which religion is supported. "Neither Hume, nor Gibbon, nor Voltaire, is trustworthy on any matter touching upon Christianity." After going through all the writings of the great French infidel, "I could not find one argument or position which was unmixed truth," says a person who, having been an infidel for years, at length embraced the truth. ‡ We are mournfully amused with the self-contradictions into which sceptics fall. Lord Herbert maintains that "the religion of nature agrees wholly with Christianity," and then he contemptuously rejects the essential doctrines of the latter. He contends, that the "principles of his universal religion are clearly known to all men, and that they were principally *unknown* to the Gentiles, who comprised almost all men." Hobbes lays down the position, that the Scriptures are "the voice of God;" still he claims, that "they

---

\* Bishop Wilson.

† Robert Hall.

‡ Nelson.



have no authority but what they derive from the prince, or the civil power." Blount argued, that "there is an infinite and eternal God, the creator of all things," yet he advocated the eternity of the world. The Earl of Shaftesbury taught, that "nothing can be more fatal to virtue than the weak and uncertain belief of future rewards and punishments," but he also taught, that a *firm* belief of them "takes away all motives to virtue." He said, "the Christian religion ought to be established by the magistrate;" still, where it had been thus planted, he made it the subject of gross ridicule. Collins declared, that "Christianity stands wholly on a false foundation;" yet, he was so inconsistent as to speak respectfully of the system. Woolston made strong avowals of his confidence in sacred things. He affirmed that infidelity had no place in his heart; that he wrote for the honor of Jesus Christ, and in defence of Christianity; that his aim was to advance the Messiahship and truth of the holy Jesus, to whom he would ascribe glory for ever. After all this, we find him holding up the gospels as full of "incredibilities, impossibilities, and absurdities." They are even represented by him as resembling "Gulliverian tales of persons and things, which, out of romance, never had a being."

It is in vain, however, to expect a full development of the tendencies of infidelity in any country not subject to its control, both in civil and in ecclesiastical affairs. God has permitted this destructive system once in a certain country to be for a time in the ascendancy, and therefore, we must direct attention to that particular section of the globe; or, in other words, to witness a full illustration of infidel principles, we must look to the "French revolution."

In France, infidels once obtained, for a time, the control. A great majority of the people had become infidels; Christianity, both in its profession and name, was renounced by the highest authority, and the abolition of its era proclaimed; the

churches were converted into temples of *reason* ; contempt for religion became the test of attachment to the government ; all distinctions of right and wrong were confounded, while the grossest debauchery triumphed ; proscription followed upon proscription, and tragedy succeeded tragedy, in almost breathless succession ; nearly the whole nation seemed converted into a horde of assassins ; hundreds of the ministers of religion were destroyed in the waters of a single river, whose current was impeded by their drowning bodies ; children were sentenced to death for the faith and loyalty of their parents, and they, whose *infancy* had sheltered them from the firing of the soldiery, were bayoneted as they clung to the knees of their destroyers. To accuse one's own father was extolled as an "act of *civism* worthy of a true republican, and to neglect it was pronounced a crime which was to be punished with death." Wives denounced their husbands, and mothers their sons, as traitors. Many women, apparently respectable in person and character, "with savage ferocity, seized between their teeth the mangled limbs of their murdered countrymen." Sepulchres of the departed were not left unmolested, while the guillotine daily toiled in its bloody work of death. The kingdom seemed changed into one great prison, and the inhabitants converted into felons. It appeared "as if the knell of the whole nation were tolled, and the world summoned to its execution and funeral." So fearfully rapid did the inhabitants disappear under the sway of infidelity, that "within the short period of ten years, not less than three millions of human beings are supposed to have perished in that single country." The annals of the earth present nothing like it elsewhere. "It was like the uncapping of a volcano, whose fires rolled one continuous sheet of desolation over all. The result terrified the world, and sent the experimentalists howling out of time, or crying to the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them."

If it be questioned whether these horrors are wholly attri-

butable to *infidelity*, or, which is the same thing, to *atheism*, "let those who doubt this recollect that the men who, by their activity and talents, prepared the minds of the people for that great change, — Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, Rousseau, and others, — were avowed enemies of revelation; that in all their writings the diffusion of scepticism and revolutionary principles went hand in hand." Surely there is nothing incredible in the idea that a reign of infidelity should produce *such* results; for the *cause* is proportionate to the effects. Substantially these very things would be developed in other countries under similar circumstances. It has been said, that "the same results from the same causes had come to pass in England, had not the sagacious Pitt, warned by the fate of his neighbors, consented to take counsel of his fears, and prepare a resisting power." \*

*There is none that doeth good.*

Such a declaration admits of an unqualified application to infidels. In various relations sustained by them, useful service may be rendered, but whatever of that nature they effect, is done, not through the influence of their principles, but in spite of them, or rather, according to the instincts given them by God, which even infidelity cannot at once root out. The horse and the ox perform valuable labors, and there is often as much of virtue in the deeds of animals as in the doings of infidels. Mere conformity to the natural laws instituted by the Creator, may result in good to others. Besides, the Almighty restrains the evil tendencies of the enemies of Christianity. Contrary to their own designs, they are sometimes *forced* into the performance of things beneficial. Like Balaam, they must bless when

---

\* Dr. Beecher.

it is in their hearts only to curse. The power to do evil is denied them, though the disposition be not wanting. In respect to the good they perform, it may be said that they proceed not as their principles instruct, but as Jehovah ordains. We are bold to declare of infidels, that "none calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth; they trust in vanity and speak lies; they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity."

Suppose we search for the benevolent achievements of infidels, where shall we turn, or whither shall we journey? "Into what obscure recesses of misery, into what dungeons have their philanthropists penetrated, to lighten the fetters and relieve the sorrows of the helpless captive? What barbarous tribes have their apostles visited, what distant climes have *they* explored, encompassed with cold, nakedness, and want, to diffuse the principles of virtue and the blessings of civilization?"

We further affirm, that infidels cannot do good, except as divinely constrained to it; for they are perpetually warring against all that is excellent in time or desirable in eternity. By precept and by example, to the extent of their ability, they prostrate the munitions of morality, and open the floodgates of wickedness. Plato defines education to be "that which qualifies men to be good citizens, and renders them fit to govern or obey." According to this or any other sensible definition of education, what sort of *educators* are infidels? Where can persons be found among them, of "such pure, uncontaminated morals, unshaken probity, and extended benevolence, that we should be in no danger of being seduced into impiety by their example? The sceptic is encompassed with nothing but obscurity, meanness, and disorder." Sensuality, in its grossest forms, *cannot* but prevail, where they enjoy the ascendancy.

Let a survey be made of civil society as it exists at the present day in countries influenced by Christianity, and jarring elements will be discovered; yea, turbid streams may be seen



flowing through the fairest moral landscapes. These *jarring elements* and these *turbid streams*, are the products of infidelity. Governments must be overturned in order to the success of this system. It cannot brook legal restraints, but seeks unchecked indulgence. Hence, for years, infidels have been toiling to subvert the institutions of our own republic. Criminals are their favorites; these shall not be punished, while innocence may be trampled in the dust. "To extinguish human life, by the hand of violence, must be quite a different thing in the eyes of a sceptic, from what it is in those of a Christian." In reply to the inquiry, what is it to kill a man, an atheist said, it is "only just to change the direction of a few ounces of blood!"

We know that infidels are not influenced by the thought of an all-seeing Deity. Nor are they deterred from the commission of wickedness through fear of future punishment, or stimulated to the performance of good works, by the hope of a heavenly reward. "Two consequences, the most disastrous to society, will inevitably follow the general prevalence of this system,—the frequent perpetration of great crimes, and the total absence of great virtues." Civil institutions are no less incompatible with it, than are the doctrines of the cross of Christ. It wages a war of extermination equally with each. Let it have unchecked sway, and it will shortly destroy every moral excellence, and convert the world into an intolerable hell.

Such is a miniature view of infidelity; imperfect it may be, because not sufficiently extended to lay open endless enormities. I have attempted only a brief survey, deriving my information chiefly from those who have possessed more ample means of unfolding its horrors. What conclusions should we form in respect to its ultimate influence on society? Will it overpower the truth of God? Shall gospel institutions fall before it? If Christianity remain, civil institutions will stand.



*Infidelity cannot harm the Church.*

The great plan of salvation devised by the Godhead, developed in the person of Jesus Christ, and rendered efficacious by the operations of the Holy Spirit, has nothing to fear from infidelity, which exists only by the suffrage of the King of kings. "The concessions of unbelievers are enough to establish the truth of the Christian religion." The evil is permitted now to spread, but is destined to be swept from the earth. "The church, like the burning bush beheld by Moses, in the land of Midian, may be encompassed with flames, but will never be consumed." Zion, the city of God, is yearly increasing in strength and glory. All the efforts of infidels hitherto, have been overruled to its advancement and glory, and it shall hereafter be thus, for the mouth of the Lord hath declared the fact. We do not even ask infidels to cease from their measures to destroy religion, unless they are prepared to "kiss the Son." Their works shall be made to redound to the glory of Immanuel. Many a saint we suppose will yet suffer on their account. "The church has endured a *pagan* and a *papal* persecution. There remains for her an *infidel* persecution, general, bitter, purifying, cementing."\* Our pity is excited for the poor dupes of so irrational a system, and we will ask God the Spirit, for Christ's sake, to have mercy upon them. Still they ought to be ashamed of their debasing stupidity and gross sensuality. The brotherhood of human beings is disgraced by their allegiance to hell, and fellowship with devils.

*Infidelity predicted.*

Inspiration has foretold the existence of this direful system, and its advocates are described as those, "that walk after the

---

\* Cecil.

flesh, in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government ; presumptuous are they, self-willed ; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own corruption. Having eyes full of adultery, and cannot cease from sin ; beguiling unstable souls ; an heart have they, exercised with covetous practices ; cursed children." 2 Pet. 2 : 10, 12, 14. After a similar manner speaks another apostle :

"Clouds they are without water, carried about of winds ; trees, whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots ; raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts ; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." Jude, 12, 13, 16.

*The Infidel's Recompense.*

Valueless is the reward which the infidel secures for his efforts ! He curses himself, while living, and reaps for his harvest in eternity the torments of an endless hell.

"Strives, labors to the last, to damn himself."

Posterity shall execrate his memory. "The name of the wicked shall rot ;" but "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Of Herbert and Hume, Wilberforce says, "Their very names would scarcely be found, if Leland had not preserved them from oblivion." Brief is the period allotted such on earth, and when they are here no more, their habitation will be eternally with devils.

"Hell's mad-houses are full of such ; too fierce,  
Too furiously insane and desperate,  
To rage unbound 'mong evil spirits damned."

*Baptized Infidelity.*

It is proper to state, in this connection, that there is much, which, though appearing under a different name, may be justly classed under the above caption. I refer to different sects of self-styled Christians, who profess adherence to revelation, yet discard its essential truths. *Unitarianism* is denominated by Wilberforce, a *half-way house* from nominal Christianity to absolute infidelity. If it be *half-way* from *the nominal*, how far is it from *the real* religion of the Bible? Some one has said, that "infidelity is nothing more than a noxious spawn, bred in the stagnant marshes of a corrupted Christianity." A remark of Coleridge to a preacher of that heartless system which rejects Christ's true divinity, has much force as well as truth. "Sir, you give up so much, that the little you retain of Christianity is not worth keeping." *Universalism*, with its ever-varying features, absurdities, and contradictions, is but masked infidelity. Nor a whit better is Mormonism, or Perfectionism, or Restorationism, or Fourierism, or Swedenborgianism.

All sects and persons belong to the catalogue of *unbelievers*, who do not place entire confidence in the Scriptures, as a rule of faith and of practice. We may not affirm our reception of some parts of the sacred volume, while rejecting others, and yet claim a rank with *believers*. "The Bible has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter." As such a volume every one must receive it, or merit the title infidel.

*Mysteries* we should expect in a revelation from God. Were it free from them, their absence would be presumptive proof that our holy book is not inspired. Creatures need to know much which it is impossible they should *comprehend*. Indeed, many of the plainest facts must be denied, if they are to be admitted

only on condition that they are perfectly understood. What phenomenon in nature may not be declared inexplicable? Who has ever fully unfolded the simplest operations in philosophy? Certain laws are discovered, and, perhaps, correctly elucidated, yet who can be sure there are not at work other more hidden agencies than man has ever perceived? And why do any laws exist? What has endowed matter with various attributes? "The truth of nature lieth hid in certain deep mines and caves." Suppose that some truths of revelation should seem to be similarly located, may we ignorant creatures take it upon ourselves to deny them? The time has arrived, when no individual should be regarded as sound in the faith, if he hesitate in the least to express entire confidence in the Bible. One part of the book is as well substantiated as another. The volume is an unit.

*Infidel's boast of Reason vain.*

We are sickened when we hear the advocates of infidelity claim to be the disciples of *reason*. Few, if any of them, are possessed of clear views in regard to the nature or the province of reason, for their own reason has its eyes put out. Of all men, they seem to be the dumbest to learn either the one or the other, in regard to this faculty of the human soul. The devotees of the worst superstitions are not so violently hostile to the dictates of reason as are they. Reason bids us prepare carefully for the future, and this heathenism claims to do, while infidelity wholly neglects the duty.

"Reason and conscience are casuists; revelation alone is the law." The will of Jehovah, made known in the Scriptures, is the only criterion by which to test moral conduct. "At the precise point where our logical square will no longer apply, the boundaries of a higher kingdom begin." There

never can be a war between reason and revelation. Both proceed from the perfect Being. It is a reasonable service, which the Bible calls upon men to render to the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Every mouth of the Lord's enemies will be stopped at the day of judgment, because reason will have nothing to utter in their behalf. "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," is a maxim of the lively oracles. "No man lives rationally, who does not live piously. Reason and a well-regulated conscience will acquit no person whom religion condemns. The sentence pronounced at one of these tribunals, is never reversed at the other. At both, the sinner meets precisely the same reception."\* In all the countless ages of eternity, the infidel will be forced to admit the justness of his overwhelming doom; his reason shall be against him forever.

*The New Phases.*

Infidelity, though the same in essentials, in every place and at all times, is continually varying its modes of operation. Recently, in this country, certain individuals have acquired celebrity by their boldness in advocating old principles under fresh epithets. I shall not honor these young assailants of truth so much as to allow their names a place on my pages. They desire to be thought champions, and doubtless expect to eclipse all their predecessors. Most of them, however, cannot acquire more than an ephemeral fame. Themselves and their writings are destined to an early oblivion, for their plumage is stolen, and their wings are waxen. None of them possess the talent of some of the old teachers of irreligion.

Of late, the greatest danger to truth has arisen from the sacredness of the garb with which infidelity has clothed itself,

---

\* Dr. Appleton.



and the apparent benevolence of its aim. Superficial observers have frequently been deceived by its arts. But the more penetrating by-standers only discover new illustrations of an old truth. "For Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works." We cannot, however, but utter a lamentation that so much countenance should be given to the green shoots of infidelity, as is done by employing them to lecture before literary societies.

Pseudo philanthropy, and infidelity has none other, is necessarily short-lived. Its efforts are always made in the vicinity of the *real*; and, to compete with this, greater sacrifices are required than man's supreme selfishness is willing to sustain for any great length of time. An infidel may call as loudly for the destruction of an evil as does the *believer*; but, when funds are demanded, the former soon sinks away into his native littleness. Nor will he vociferate against a wrong, except as he hopes to annihilate the Church by so doing, and thus destroy a good infinitely greater than man can devise.

A few years have sufficed for the unmasking of numerous infidel societies, that sought to palm themselves off as institutions of benevolence. Defeated in past attempts, others will be made. The depravity of infidels, like volcanic fires, must have an outlet somewhere. Fill up one crater, and another will be formed. While the fountain remains, eruptions must occur more or less frequently.

#### DEATH OF INFIDELS.

The correctness or incorrectness of a religious sentiment, is not affected by the manner in which its advocates leave the world. Conformity to the divine standard is always right, and a want of it proves the delinquent to be in the wrong. Should

the haters of Jehovah die apparently in peace, there is for them nothing but terror after death. Yet, it is well to compare the exit of those who have confided in Christ, with that of such as have denied him. Infidels must all die. Numbers of them have already paid this debt of nature. My reader is invited to look at a few death-bed scenes of prominent unbelievers.

*Saurin's description.*

“O, were my tongue dipped in the gall of celestial displeasure, I would describe to you the state of a man expiring in the cruel uncertainties of unbelief. Ah, see every thing conspires to trouble him now. I am dying; I despair of recovering; physicians have given me over; the sighs and tears of my friends are useless; the world cannot cure me; I must die. It is death itself, that preaches to me. Whither am I going? What will become of my body? My God, what a frightful spectacle! The horrid torches, the dismal shroud, the coffin, the tolling bell, the subterranean abode! What will become of my soul? I am ignorant of its destiny, I am plunging into eternal night. My infidelity tells me my soul is nothing but a portion of subtile matter; another world, a vision; immortality, a fancy; but yet I feel, I know not what, that troubles my infidelity. Annihilation, terrible as it is, would appear tolerable to me, were not the ideas of heaven and of hell to present themselves to me in spite of myself. I see heaven, that immortal mansion of glory, shut against me. I see it at an immense distance. I see it, but my crimes forbid me to enter. I see hell; *hell*, which I have ridiculed; it opens under my feet. I hear the horrible groans of the damned; the smoke of the bottomless pit chokes my words, and wraps my thoughts in suffocating darkness.

“Such is the infidel, on his dying bed. This is not an imaginary flight; it is not an arbitrary invention; it is what we see

every day, in those *fatal* visits to which our ministry engages us, and to which God seems to call us to be sorrowful witnesses of his displeasure and vengeance. This is what infidelity comes to ; this is what infidelity is good for ; thus must sceptics die.”\*

Others have presented similar pictures of what themselves have seen in the departure from time of this guilty class.

“I had heard groans, even if the teeth were clenched for fear of complaint, such as I never wish to hear again ; and I had looked into countenances, such as I never hoped to see again.” Such is the testimony of a physician in regard to the death-bed scenes of infidels, witnessed in his medical practice.† Chesterfield, himself a freethinker, declared, that “when one does see death near, let the best or the worst people say what they please, it is a serious consideration.”

### *Death of Voltaire.*

The following are certain incidents and facts, connected with the dissolution of Voltaire, as gathered from authentic sources. “Doctor, I am abandoned by God and man ; I will give you half of what I am worth, if you will give me six months to live.” When his medical attendant informed him that he could not survive that number of weeks, he replied, “Then I shall go to hell.” His associates in iniquity crowded about him ; but, with execrations, he exclaimed, “Retire ; it is you that have brought me to my present state. Be gone ; I could have done without you all, but you could not exist without me, and what a wretched glory you have produced me.” Sometimes he would cry out, “O Christ, O Jesus Christ.” He signed a recantation of his infidel creed, and professed to

---

\* Saurin's Sermons, No. 23.

† Nelson. See his Cause and Cure of Infidelity.

die in fellowship with the church of Rome. The physician affirmed, that "the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire;" and the nurse who attended him said she would on no account incur the danger of witnessing again such a scene as his death furnished.\*

*Death of Hume.*

Hume testified, that "the comforting views exhibited by a belief in futurity are ravishing and delightful;" but to them he was an entire stranger. In the near prospect of dissolution, he conducted neither like a philosopher, nor a man of sense. His conversation was foolish in the extreme, and sometimes he amused himself with a game of cards, "as it were, on his coffin-lid." Just before his death he finished an essay in favor of suicide. In respect to the future, he was compelled to say, "The whole is a riddle, an enigma, an inexplicable mystery." A few months after the decease of this man, some gentlemen were conversing together in a stage-coach, respecting the comparative tranquillity with which infidels and Christians may leave the world. Hume being adduced by one of them, as an example of a happy departure from time, the speaker was accosted by a lady thus: "Sir, I was Mr. Hume's housekeeper for many years, and was with him in his last moments. It is true, Sir, that when his friends were with him, he was cheerful, and seemed quite unconcerned about his approaching fate; nay, frequently, he spoke of it to them in a jocular and playful way; but when he was alone, the scene was very different; he was any thing but composed; his mental agitation was so great, at times, as to occasion his whole bed to shake. He could not allow the candles to be put out

---

\* See Christian Spectator, Vol. V., p. 343. Also Wilson's Evid. of Christianity, Vol. II., p. 231.

during the night, nor would he be left alone for a minute." She stated, that involuntary breathings of remorse and frightful startings, disturbed sleep, and still more disturbed wakings, evinced, that all was not right within. Such exhibitions of fear and horror continued and increased, till he became insensible.\*

*Death of Hobbes and Gibbon.*

Hobbes, when alone, "was haunted with the most tormenting reflections, and would awake in terror, if his candle happened to go out in the night. He never could bear any discourse of death, and seemed to cast off all thought of it." As he drew near to the grave, he affirmed "He was about to take a leap in the dark." Gibbon, under like circumstances, admitted, that "when he considered all worldly things, they were fleeting; when he looked back, they had been fleeting; and when he looked forward all was *dark and doubtful*."† But this poor man was "full of vanity, to the last dregs of life," and died as the fool dieth.

*Death of Tindal and Altamont.*

Tindal died with this prayer on his lips: "If there be a God, I desire that he may have mercy on me." Hear the confessions of the expiring Altamont. "This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs within the jaws of immortality, is doubtless immortal. And as for a

---

\* See Christian Spectator, Vol. V., p. 142. Wilson's Evid. Vol. II., p. 229. Spirit of the Pilgrims, Vol. V., p. 172.

† Buck's Religious Anecdotes. Art. *Infidelity*.



Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel. Remorse for the past, throws my thought on the future; worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past; I turn and turn, and find no ray." \*

*Death of Thomas Paine.*

So terrified was the above-named individual, during the latter part of his life, that he would not suffer himself to be left alone, night or day. If he could discover no one by him, he would *scream* till a person appeared. A lady having informed him that she had committed to the flames a copy of his "*Age of Reason*," he declared, that he wished all his readers had been as wise; and added, "If ever the devil had an agent on earth, I have been one." Amid paroxysms of distress, with terrific tones, he would for a long time cry out, "O Lord, help me; God help, Jesus Christ, help me." When interrogated respecting his feelings towards the Redeemer of men, he gave unequivocal indications of settled hatred, and of having been left to believe in strong delusions that he might be damned.

*Deaths in an Infidel Party.*

A party of infidels was formed in Orange County, New York, upwards of sixty years since, composed of twenty men and some females. "They claimed a right to indulge in lasciviousness, and to recreate themselves as their propensities and appetites should dictate." In a few years, nearly, if not quite all of them, came to miserable deaths. One, a teacher of their sentiments, was shot while riding on a stolen horse. A brother of this man was killed by the same means, when sitting on a log, *Sabbath* morning, playing cards, and the agent of death

---

\* Dr. Young.

in this case was a *robber*. Another, being on horseback, was shot by a youth, the son of a man whom he had murdered. This one remained unburied till the crows devoured his flesh. A fourth, having been confined in prison for crime, committed suicide. Some of the number died of intemperance. Of these, W. C. was devoured by swine, his bones being recognized by the clothing found with them; and J. A. was not discovered, till a dog brought home a part of a limb, which was identified by the stocking.\*

The foregoing examples may suffice for my purpose. Advocates of infidelity *exist*, when their mortal bodies have ceased to be among men. They then eat of the fruit of their own way, and are filled with their own devices. "This is the portion of a wicked man from God, and the heritage appointed unto him by God." Let those who now despise true religion know that the Lord will at length bring them into judgment.

#### *The Remedy for Infidelity.*

How shall this tide of iniquity be stayed? Who shall close the floodgates of pollution opened by infidelity? Important questions, and easily answered. The very Scriptures, which this system discards, must be urged with all their power against it. An eminent divine once said, that "the Bible has converted more infidels than all other books of evidence that exist."† The Word of God, attended by the Holy Spirit, can slay the beast, and it is the duty of Christians to go forth armed with these weapons for the destruction of this and every sin.

Come, thou omnipotent Renovator of the world, save the deluded, debased victims of infidelity, from their present

---

\* See "Infidelity Portrayed," by Abner Cunningham, for these and many more similar facts.

† Dr. A. Alexander.

degradation, and from the flames of that eternal hell into which they must quickly be cast, if not rescued by sovereign grace. Jehovah of hosts, hurl them not at once into the lowest pit of destruction as they merit, but let thine infinite goodness be displayed in their behalf.

## THE SABBATH.

In the closest connection with the inspired account of the earth's formation, and of man's creation, we are told that a part of time was sanctified. "And on the seventh day God ended," had already completed, as the original implies, "his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it." No language can more clearly teach, that immediately after *the six days'* work was performed, Jehovah instituted a weekly Sabbath. And can it be reasonably questioned that the day was ordained for the human family then in its infancy, but destined to extend over the globe, and to exist for thousands of generations? The fact that it was given to the representatives of the race, is not only presumptive evidence of the universality of its design; but requires us so to regard it, unless, by the nature of the case, or by some limiting declaration from the Author, we are forbidden to view it in that light. No intimation of the kind, however, can be found. So far is the Scripture account of its origin from deciding any thing concerning the discontinuance of holy time, we might as logically conclude that one of the six secular days was to cease after a short period as that the seventh should. Adam and his companion, while holy, doubtless desired an often recurring period, when they might be entirely released from the care of plants and flowers, to commune with their Maker. Much more then is it needful for their depraved posterity. "It is evident in the nature of things that a portion

of time should be set apart for worship, and for getting ready to die." Probably no unsophisticated reader of the second chapter in Genesis ever imagined that the Sabbath was not intended for the family of man in all the changes to which it might be subjected, from Eden to the end of years. Yet, persons have lived, who held that no division of time was to be regarded as holy, till after twenty-five centuries of the world's appointed period should have rolled into eternity. Such an opinion comported well enough with the notions of the Jewish Talmudists, who considered the Sabbath too good for any people upon earth except their own. But they, if the originators of this curious idea, are not the only class of men who have endeavored to make it appear that no other nation was ever required to *observe* the Sabbath. Individuals of no ordinary pretensions to learning and piety have advocated a like sentiment. They have maintained that when the appointment of a sacred day was first issued, it was done *prospectively*; that the Most High, looking forward two thousand five hundred years to the era of Israel's becoming an independent people, announced it for them. Surely men who can reason thus, are not worthy of being styled *doctors of divinity*!

*The Patriarchs and the Sabbath.*

Perhaps some one inquires, what became of the Sabbath during the period which intervened between its original appointment, and the next plain mention of it, when the descendants of Jacob were encamped in the wilderness between Egypt and Sinai? To this, I reply, that the day always returned in its allotted order; had its own rising and setting sun, and was uniformly observed by *the pious*, as a precious season of holy rest and hallowed devotion. Had the day been suitably kept by all people, from the dawn of its existence, there would have been no occasion for the flood. Wickedness

never becomes predominant where the Sabbath is duly regarded. Therefore, we have no good reason for supposing, that a majority of the antediluvians, or Sodomites, or Canaanites, paid much attention to this sacred day. But why is no mention made of the Sabbath in the centuries just named? Answer — the Holy Ghost did not deem it needful to make any record of it for the years specified. His reasons are not within our reach ; but we know they were potent. We may, however, remark, that if the silence of the historian is to be taken as proof any way, it is that the day was regularly kept ; for had it not been, an event of so fearful a nature would probably have been placed upon record. It was just as unnecessary to write down for subsequent ages the stated return of holy time, and its due observance, as it would have been to state frequently the common phenomena of nature. When at a period later than that to which we are referring, the sun and the moon were arrested for a while, the wonderful fact was penned for the benefit of after generations. So if at any time, in the early days of the world, a pious man lived, and did not keep holy one seventh part of his time, as the Lord had directed, so amazing an occurrence might well have found a place on inspiration's page. Those familiar with the history of the patriarchs can hardly think they were such heathen as not to remember and keep the Sabbath. Circumcision is not mentioned from the time of Joshua, till Jeremiah was prophet in Israel. Why was this omission,— because the rite was not administered? No ; but, on account of the uniformity with which the law concerning it was obeyed. By some means, during the sojourn of the people in the wilderness, the command requiring it was neglected, and this fact the sacred historian recorded. Here I would state, that there is just such incidental evidence of the Sabbath being known from Eden to Sinai, as might be expected would appear. Frequent allusion is made to the division of time into weeks. God said to



Noah, "Yet seven days and I will cause it to rain." Gen. 7: 4. And that patriarch, in sending forth the dove from the ark at different times, did it at the expiration of seven days; from which we have a right to infer that time was divided into weeks. The word week also occurs in Gen. 29: 27, 28. "Fulfil her week." Joseph mourned seven days for his father at the threshing floor of Atad. The three friends who came to sympathize with Job, sat down upon the earth seven days. A division of time into weeks of seven days each, appears to have been common among many nations. "One of the most striking confirmations of the Mosaic history of the creation from heathen sources, is the general adoption of the division of time into weeks, which extends from Europe to Hindostan, and has equally prevailed among the Hebrews, Egyptians, Chinese, Greeks, Romans, and northern barbarians." \* Philo says, the seventh day is the holy day of the world. By which he means that a peculiar sanctity belongs to it. Josephus testifies that "there is no city of the Grecians, nor any of the barbarians, nor any whatever, whither our custom of resting on the seventh day hath not come." † The term seven, occurs very frequently in the Scriptures. It "is derived from a root, signifying to be full, complete, entirely made up,"—and is therefore "often called the perfect number."

### *No Manna on the Sabbath.*

Our next stand-point in regard to the Sabbath is at the foot of Sinai. The Israelites, having been brought miraculously out of Egypt into the plain, situated at the base of the mountain just named, there received the law of ten commands. It is needful, however, to look a little further back into their his-

---

\* T. H. Horne.

† See his second book against Apion.

tory, when God began to furnish them with manna. The sixth day of the week had arrived, and on the morning of it, a double quantity of this bread from heaven was lying upon the ground. But, what did it mean? The like quantity had not previously fallen at once. Only a few days had elapsed since this supply of food began to be received. Let us hear the explanation of Moses: "This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the Sabbath unto the Lord." But when, we ask, had Jehovah spoken of such a sacred day of repose? Verily, it was when he had finished the work of creation. There is naught, having the appearance of a new institution of hallowed time. Perhaps, during their long season of servitude, the most scrupulous among them had been compelled to forget the Sabbath; and moreover, it may be, that during the month of their marching, they had been too much confused for a proper observance of the day. Now, however, the matter must be set entirely right. The chosen people of God shall begin to be characterized as a Sabbath-keeping community. No manna shall fall during holy hours. The seventh day pours its light upon the millions of Jacob's descendants; and their great leader, acting by the inspiration of the Most High, directs them to eat the extra portion which had fallen on the preceding day. Then was announced a rule by which they were to be governed in all the subsequent period, during which the skies should supply them with daily bread. "Six days ye shall gather it, but on the seventh, which is the Sabbath, in it there shall be none." Certain wicked individuals went out on the very first Sabbath in search of the manna, — "And the Lord said unto Moses, how long refuse ye to keep my commandments and laws?" To what enactments does Jehovah thus refer? Surely to those which he established when he placed man in the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it.

*The Law from Sinai.*

Behold, the top of Sinai is in a blaze ; thunders are rolling on its summit, which shake the whole range of Horeb to its deep foundations. God is there, and a law — not a single precept — but a code consisting of ten specifications, is proclaimed by himself amid the terrific grandeur which surrounds him. The *first* specification presents the Lawgiver as the only object of adoration ; the next prohibits the making of any image or likeness of the Deity ; the third forbids the taking of his name in vain ; and the fourth is in these seemingly abrupt, yet significant terms : “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” This particular item in the decalogue has been well styled the “golden clasp,” binding together both tables of the law. Must we hear it said, by men who ought better to understand the use of languages, that now, for the first time, the Sabbath has an existence ; that it was born in the Arabian wilderness ? Begone, such pusillanimous attempts to belittle in the eyes of the world, the Sabbath of our God. Israel was required to remember a day, which was consecrated by Jehovah twenty-five hundred years, previous to the grand exhibition on Sinai. Let us for a few moments, in imagination, take a position on the mount where Jehovah stood and called the world's attention to his own holy day. From that elevated point, we look back through the period of twenty-five centuries, casting our eyes upon patriarchs, both antediluvian and postdiluvian. We behold the venerable Enoch, more devout as holy time returns ; and ripening each day, — but far *more rapidly* on sacred days — for that rest which is prepared in heaven. We see Noah, a faithful preacher of righteousness, proclaiming the law of the Lord respecting the Sabbath, to those who lived prior to the deluge. On the top of Ararat, we hear him who comes forth of the ark as the chief representative from the old world, exhorting his household to

remember in all their career the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Before us too, in sacred grandeur and heavenly simplicity, appear Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, offering their sweetest praises and most fervent prayers on this day of hallowed rest. The Sabbath went out from Paradise into all the world, but, alas, excepting by here and there a saint, it was either forgotten or remembered only to be abused; and the Lord of hosts causes the trumpet, whose tones wax louder and still more loud, to summon the attention of all the earth, that he may repeat this all-important charge, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."

*Objections considered.*

Dost thou, reader, inquire whether, inasmuch as Israel were the recipients of the command, they are not the only people upon whom it is absolutely binding? Verily it must be committed to some people in particular, if it were intended for all men. Had the ten commandments been thrown broadcast from Sinai's summit, and not written as we know they were by the finger of God on tables of stone, and intrusted to Moses, who, in after ages, would have possessed them? The publishing of a tract, or a book, is always committed definitely to some one person or more, that it may be sent to numberless readers. So God must needs make choice of one people to communicate unto all others his immutable moral code. In this case he selected his own people, the true and only Church.

Will any one object to the selecting of *that* people? Wilt thou, reader, assume to be more wise than Jehovah? Wilt thou insist that because the law was given to Israel, therefore, it shall not include others in its demands? Persist, then, if thou must trample upon the fourth precept of the decalogue; yet let consistency mark thy conduct, and tread also upon the

other nine. Is the interrogation changed, and am I required to tell why we, who live more than three thousand years since the exhibition on Sinai, are held by the law touching the Sabbath, and not by every other enactment which issued from the same authority on the same occasion? We are bound by all, unless evidence to the contrary shall appear. Is there any? What are termed the ten commandments are equally binding upon the human family, wherever its members dwell, and in whatever age of the world they have an existence. The two tables constituting the moral law are so united together, and the several precepts are such a perfect unity, that whosoever offends in one point, is guilty in respect to the whole. (James 2: 10.) An old Talmudist was right, when he affirmed that the individual who discards the fourth command, denies the entire law. Evidence that polytheism, or atheism, or image worship, or profaneness, or stealing, or lying, or committing adultery, is not allowable, stands on precisely the same basis with the evidence that it is not right in any part of the world or in any period of time, to break the Sabbath. In the summaries that Christ gave of the moral law, he never made a distinction by which one or more of the precepts were excluded. To him they were all alike holy and obligatory. But from Sinai issued a great number of regulations, which obviously were not intended to be followed, except by the Israelites and Gentile proselytes. It is easy to see the difference between these latter and the ten commandments. God himself limited the period for the continuance of the ceremonial observances, which ceased more than eighteen hundred years since. That code, however, termed the moral law, cannot die while he exists a holy Jehovah.

Is it urged as an objection to the sentiment, that the Sabbath is an institution for the world, that, in some passages of Scripture, the Lord reminds the Jews of his special kindness in giving the day to them? There are certain texts, which



I suppose may have suggested this objection. As for instance, Deut. 5 : 15, where Jehovah says to Israel, "Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm ; therefore, the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day." Also in Ezek. 20 : 12, we read, "Moreover, also, I gave them my Sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." In these quotations of holy writ, I observe that the language itself precludes the idea of the Sabbath being only for Israel. It is *the Sabbath*, or *God's Sabbath*, which was given that people to be kept ; and not a day instituted for them. Why the Sabbath should be so identified with them has been explained. There is great force in the allusion to their former bondage, when probably they were not allowed to rest even on holy time. While other nations were left to curse themselves by unceasing toil, and uninterrupted wickedness, the Lord had rescued his people, and required them to observe his day of sacred rest, which the world should have kept, but had not. Now Israel delivered can obey the law touching holy time, and if they do it, the Lord will bless them in so doing. On each recurrence of the day, that nation must have been most strikingly reminded of the contrast in their condition as freeman, compared with what it was in servitude. The Sabbath is a day for the remembrance of mercies. Had the people of these United States sustained the same relation to the Most High, which characterized the posterity of Jacob, doubtless, when our independence of the British yoke was fully achieved, the Lord would have directed us to commemorate on the Sabbath his great mercy to us in granting us deliverance from our oppressors ; but being differently situated, we celebrate the fourth day of July.

*A Summary of Arguments for the Sabbath.*

In concluding this part of the discussion respecting the early commencement, and the perpetual obligation to keep the Sabbath, I introduce the following summary from the writings of another, varying, however, the phraseology of the original. That the sabbatical institution forms a part of the law of God, which was revealed to mankind in Paradise, we are authorized to conclude for the ensuing reasons. (1.) Immediately after describing the six days' work of creation, the sacred writer says, that God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. (2.) The institution is founded on a divine pattern, on the recorded example of the Almighty himself. (3.) It is in accordance with the very nature of things, that such a portion of time should be set apart, as the Scriptures intimate the Sabbath was. For the due and orderly worship of our Creator, and for the effectual culture of the immortal mind, the day is necessary; and thus like that pure theology from which it is inseparable, it is applicable to all mankind in every age of the world. (4.) The requirement to observe the Sabbath involves an acceptable exercise of faith in God, who is pleased to provide for the wants of his children, without demanding of them, or of inferior creatures, which are subject to man, an unbroken succession of days of toil.\* This last reason is susceptible of being greatly expanded. God has ordained labor for the erring race of man, who, if they will not comply, deserve no sustenance. "In the sweat of thy face, shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground;" yet that Being, whom we all have offended, and who has decreed that we shall procure a livelihood, by a severe taxing of our energies, absolutely prohibits secular employments on every seventh day, thus test-

---

\* See Gurney on the Sabbath.

ing our confidence in his wisdom and goodness. If we sweetly fall in with his arrangement, then do we evince faith in his ability to plan for us, and also in his readiness to meet the necessities of that portion of time, during which we suspend our ordinary avocations. On the other hand, they who persevere every day alike in secular employments, show that they have no confidence in either the wisdom or the benevolence of the Creator.

On the value of this holy day, an eminent divine thus speaks: "It promotes cleanliness, and ministers in a very high degree to health and intellectual improvement; it kindly remembers the working animals, and releases them one day in seven from their toils; it restores the man of a thousand cares and perplexities to the bosom of his family, and affords him time for reading, for reflection, and for the religious instruction of his household; it brings more gain to individuals and to the public, than could possibly be derived from unremitting application to secular pursuits. By its weekly return, it rebukes our worldliness. It is a far surer guarantee for the perpetuity of our free institutions, than all the physical resources of the country. It is, in short, the true palladium, which protects the temple of liberty, as well as the ark of the covenant." \* Since the above extract was committed to writing by its highly distinguished author, great efforts have been made to collect and classify facts, bearing upon many of the positions laid down by him; and it has been found, by actual observation and experience, that the Sabbath is essential to man, whether we consider him in his physical nature, intellectual endowments, or moral relations.

---

\* Dr. Humphrey,

## CHRIST AND THE SABBATH.

Early in his ministry, Christ said, "Think not, that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets." Matt. 5 : 17. But we meet many who seem to suppose that he did annul both, in regard to the Sabbath. While he affirms, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," they *insist* that he did annihilate the *fourth* precept of the decalogue.

At the outset of our examination of so singular an idea, we must be permitted to inform this class of persons, that they entirely mistake the nature of the sabbatical institution. Had the Saviour attempted to do away any part of the moral law, he would at once have defeated the end of his mission to earth. The Sabbath never had a place among the Messianic types and shadows, and of course was not a figure of him *who was to come*. As soon will the throne of Jehovah crumble, as the moral law cease to be universally binding on man ! The fourth commandment abrogated ? No ! It remains as it was placed, "in the *bosom* of the decalogue," and forms now, as it did originally, the "golden clasp" which joins together the two tables of the imperishable code. The Sabbath, which began at the close of the *six days' work*, whose first dawn was celebrated by the song of the morning stars and the shout of the sons of God, will not withdraw its claims for a sacred regard, till all the redeemed have come to the celestial Zion ; *never* shall it be annihilated. It may be eventually lost, not destroyed ; lost in its anti-type, heaven, as the twilight of the morning disappears in the splendor of the rising sun.

*The Miracles performed on the Sabbath.*

Still some with apparent sincerity contend, that Jesus virtually set aside the Sabbath by his example and occasional

remarks ! Many, who are notoriously reckless in respect to holy time, appeal to the *doings* of Christ for support ! He sanctions their trampling upon those days which Christians deem sacred !

I will therefore, as a believer in the sinlessness of the Saviour, and as a sincere inquirer after truth, carefully examine his conduct in reference to the observance of the Sabbath. Two points should be investigated ; and the first may be thrown into the following question :

Under what circumstances, did Christ act in regard to the Sabbath ? The second has respect to the things done by him, which are thought to countenance loose views and practice relative to Sabbath keeping.

I. *The circumstances.* Let it be remembered, that the Lord Jesus never wasted words ; that he always adapted his instruction to the need of those whom he addressed. Hence, if there were *no occasion* for him to urge the Jews to a stricter external observance of the Sabbath, than he witnessed, we ought not to expect to hear him doing it. It is a fact, that at the time of our Saviour's sojourn on earth, the nominal people of God did *rigidly* obey the fourth command, as to the mere outward requirement, being *scrupulously* and *superstitiously* exact. There was no other part of the Mosaic code, on which they so much insisted, as upon the law of the Sabbath. Holy days were kept by them with the greatest visible strictness and severity. They would suffer themselves to be cut in pieces by their enemies, rather than use self-defence during sacred hours. It is convincingly evident, that they needed no admonitions for a closer *external* observance of sanctified time. But how were they in respect to the *spiritual* part of the requirement ? In this they were lamentably deficient ! They were remarkably degenerate and corrupt ; vice abounded. "To the law of God, was added a multitude of unauthorized traditions." The Pharisees advanced as many as thirty-nine



negative precepts respecting things, which might not be done on the Sabbath, and these precepts generally branched out into various minor details.\* In a word, at the time of Christ, the Jews were resting in an irrational, *external* regard for the Sabbath, whilst its true intent was not heeded by them. The fourth commandment stood in all its power and glory. Wherefore there was no more need of Messiah's giving a new *law* for the proper keeping of holy days, than there was for him to make a new sun to enlighten the earth.

II. The things done by the Saviour, which are supposed wholly to set aside the Sabbath, or at least greatly to lower the standard of keeping it.

In Matthew 12 : 13, we find it recorded, that he on the Sabbath restored to vigor a man's withered hand. Luke mentions in chap. 13 : 12, of his gospel history, the case of a woman who had been infirm *eighteen years*, and whom Jesus healed on the Sabbath. She was so bowed together, that she "could in no wise lift up herself." The compassionate Redeemer, seeing her, called her to himself, and said unto her, "Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." John mentions in chapter 5, of his narrative, the healing of a man at the pool of Bethesda, and (9th chap.) the giving of sight to a man who had always been blind. Both these miracles were performed during holy time. The above are not *all* the instances of what are termed Sabbath-breaking miracles ; but they are prominent ones, and form a fit example of all. In relation to them, I submit a few remarks ; and,

1. The miracles performed by Christ on the Sabbath, furnish no evidence that he ever absented himself from public wor-

---

\* See the work of J. J. Gurney, on the Sabbath. This man, deceased within a few years, was a learned and pious member of the Society of Friends in England. He wrote a book in defence of the Sabbath, which may well claim the regard of all classes.

ship for the sake of performing them. He whose withered hand Jesus restored, (see Matt. 12 : 13,) was in the synagogue at the time of the miraculous cure. So was the woman whom Luke mentions, (13 : 12.) The man at the pool, Bethesda, was under the very eaves of the temple, and his divine Benefactor was probably either entering or coming out of the temple ; that is, was *either going to or returning from public worship*, when his pitying eye fell on the cripple. Eight and thirty years had this individual been diseased, and long had he waited at the pool for healing, because an angel descended at a certain season, and imparted healing properties to the water. But his lingering had amounted to nothing. Another person always stepped in before him and cut off his opportunity. How could the compassionate Jesus pass him, without showing him mercy ? Respecting the miracle wrought upon the man born blind, the circumstances are these : Christ had been teaching in the temple, where he declared, in plain terms, his own divinity ; at this, the Jews were so enraged, that they procured stones to cast at him ; (see John 8 : 59.) Thus assailed, the Redeemer escaped, and passing out of the temple, he saw this man that had never seen, and who was then, perhaps, feeling his way into the sacred edifice, in order to hear words from the lips of the Divine Teacher. A fit subject, truly, was he to receive the pity and favor of the merciful Mediator. How suitable, too, it was, that a miracle *proving* his own divinity, should be wrought there by Jesus. The Jews disbelieved his word, perhaps they will regard his work. On account of his *teaching* they took up stones to cast at him ; but will they not soften down if he perform before them a notable miracle ? Surely, if the Son of God cannot be allowed to *preach* on the Sabbath, no one should object to his giving sight to a blind man on that day. If not permitted to open the eyes of the mind, let him operate on those of the body. If not allowed to benefit men's souls, let him do good to their flesh.

2. No circumstance connected with these miracles, indicates the least design on the part of Christ to lower the high standard of Sabbath-keeping, which was originally set up. These benevolent interpositions in behalf of the afflicted, were a part of the *holy* work, which he came to perform. What Christian, of even puritanical exactness, judges it wrong to pray on sacred days for the sick? Is it not a time-honored practice to desire public prayers for them? If it be proper to ask on the Sabbath, healing for the diseased, it cannot be improper for the only restorer of health, to hear and answer on that day our prayers. Away, then, with all this *pharisaical* quibbling about Christ's breaking the Sabbath by working miracles. He might as justly be accused of violating the fourth command by publishing salvation.

3. All the miracles which our Saviour performed during holy hours, were not only adapted to refute the superstitious notions of the Jews, but to promote a sacred regard for the Sabbath by attending regular worship. They may have been performed, in some cases, as illustrative of positions or declarations in his public discourses. Two of the remarkable cures, to which our attention has been directed in this article, were effected in the synagogue, at the time of divine service; and the other two occurred near the temple of God. Think, reader, of that man with a withered hand, and of that woman so bowed down, as not to be able to lift up herself. How infirm; yet both were at the place of public worship. Would you have been there under such circumstances? On the other hand, would you not have failed of being cured, by neglecting to meet the infallible Physician in the place appointed? Verily, did Christ *honor* the Sabbath by his miracles wrought on that day; and peculiar favor did he show to those who made sacrifices, to appear before God in his earthly courts. May we not reasonably suppose, that Jesus will now confer marked favors on those who are peculiarly careful not to forsake the

assembling of themselves together for prayer and praise? Is he not now, as well the restorer of strength to the weak, as the giver of peace to the penitent and believing? Can it be at all surprising that multitudes are very feeble when we consider how seldom they attempt to walk to the house of God? Who can reasonably doubt that Jehovah frowns upon the neglecters and unfrequent attendants at his temple? Oh, the apologies that are made for neglecting the sanctuary! Many *professors* of religion seem to regard a meeting-house as a prison. They do not enter it half so cheerfully as Paul and Silas went into the dungeon at Philippi. Not a few, who ought to be glad when it is said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," stop their ears at the call. Whence this dislike of God's tabernacles? Have they ceased to be amiable to his people? Ah, whoever loathes the sanctuary, is not a Christian. Love for public worship is one of the surest proofs of piety, and where this evidence is lacking, none beside can convince.

4. It was the custom of our Saviour to honor the Sabbath by attending the services of the sanctuary. "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.—And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days." See Luke 4: 16, 31, etc. Our blessed Redeemer set an example of keeping holy time, and happy are they who copy it. It is lawful to do good on a sacred day, and the mode in which we are required to attempt it, is to hallow the consecrated hours by private and public worship.

#### *His Disciples and the Cornfield.*

There is a transaction of our Saviour, relating to the Sabbath, which does not rank under the head of miracles, but to which

frequent appeal is made by the violators of the fourth commandment. Three Evangelists have recorded it. Matthew 12 : 1, states the case thus : " At that time, Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn ; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat." Certain Pharisees saw this procedure, and entered complaint to Jesus that his disciples had dishonored holy time. " Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath-day." Jesus defended the accused, and upbraided the accusers, charging them with condemning the guiltless, and declaring that " The Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day."

In the course our Saviour took concerning the accusation of the Pharisees, many persons seem to suppose that they have full liberty granted them, by him, to riot and ramble, work and play, fish and hunt ; yea, even to plunder in the fields of their neighbors on the Sabbath. Perhaps it may not be impertinent, to ask such individuals, whether they ever look to the Lord Jesus, for authority in other matters, besides Sabbath-breaking. We might inquire of them, if they have so much as read the sermon on the mount. Indeed, it might not be amiss to put to them a question of this nature: Did you ever carefully read those verses, narrating the event to which you refer, for encouragement in treating with disrespect the holy day ? We have generally found that those who attempt to defend their wickedness, by an appeal to the Scriptures, are utterly ignorant of what inspiration does teach on any given subject.

Since, however, the Sabbath-breaker appeals to authority so *high* and *weighty*, it becomes us to examine the deed which offended the Pharisees, but *delights* the enemies of all, even *external* righteousness.

1. As to the corn or cornfield, we observe, that the term, corn, means grain. The field through which our Saviour went with his disciples, was, probably, one of wheat or barley, and



this fact is noticed, because to pluck a few heads of wheat or barley, is much less like manual labor, than is breaking off heavy ears of corn, such as grow in our fields. The act performed by the disciples was easy and trifling. *We* can hardly pass along the side of a wheat-field without doing the same thing, though not at all influenced by hunger.

2. It should be noticed that the Pharisees did not complain of Christ and his disciples for *passing through* the corn; it was the plucking and eating that gave the offence. Hence, I suppose, that our Lord and his company were not going out of their direct way. It is stated, on good authority, that there were in Judea, paths leading through the fields of grain, which were designed to accommodate people, just as we have them, to shorten distance. Jesus and his band of followers did not turn aside from the shortest course, which lay *through* a field of grain. We are warranted in the supposition that they were all hastening to a place of worship.

3. The disciples were in want of food, and Jesus, their Master, was poor, not having "where to lay his head." He had no house of his own, into which to invite his fatigued friends; no store from which to give them supplies. Indeed, they were dependent on charity. Were they, however, in possession of money, they would not have made purchases on the Sabbath, if the transaction could possibly be avoided.

Zeal for God may have been the *occasion* of the fainting condition of the disciples. Henry shrewdly remarks, "*they were hungry*, because, intent on Sabbath work, they forgot to eat bread, or spent so much time in morning *worship*, they had no time for their morning *meal*, but came out fasting, because they would not come *late*." Lightfoot says, "the custom of the nation had as yet held them fasting, which suffered none, unless they were sick, to taste any thing on the Sabbath before the morning prayers of the synagogue were done." But it is needless to inquire minutely for reasons; the disciples of

Jesus felt, as we all have felt, hungry. *We* have large supplies at hand ; they had only ears of standing grain. "It was a dry breakfast, but the Pharisees would not let them eat that in quietness." A law of the land, given by God himself, allowed them to pluck those ears of corn, and to eat as much as they might need. "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbor, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand ; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbor's standing corn." Deut. 23 : 25. It is common now, in the land of Palestine, to do just what the disciples of Jesus did when they plucked those ears of grain. "Our Arabs were an hungered, and, going into the fields, they plucked the ears of corn and did eat, rubbing them in their hands."\*

Thus it appears, that the thing done, the circumstances of the case, and the defence of his disciples by Jesus, do not afford the least countenance to violations of the Sabbath. One may as well resort to an iceberg for heat, or to a cavern for light, or to a cloud for support, as to this portion of sacred history, for countenance in breaking the fourth commandment. We urge you, all ye despisers of God's holy day, to take this account recorded for your instruction ; examine it with care, and ye will find nothing to quiet an uneasy conscience.

To strange expedients are *ye* driven, who trample on Jehovah's law ! Into what an abyss are ye plunging ! How madly set upon destroying yourselves ! Let common sense exert a moderate sway over you, and we shall no more hear you saying that Christ broke the Sabbath by working miracles ; or that by performing them in holy time, he countenanced lax views in respect to it, or that he did thus in any way.

One statement of the sacred historian, speaks most decidedly in respect to the influence which Christ's teaching and life

---

\* Robinson's Bib. Researches, Vol. II., p. 192.

exerted on his followers, in regard to the observance of the time as holy. Certain females, who had accompanied him faithfully during his ministry, who came with him from Galilee and witnessed his crucifixion, were spectators of his burial. They "beheld the sepulchre and how his body was laid." Desirous of doing all in their power to honor, in his death, him whom they had loved and worshipped while he was living, "they returned and prepared spices and ointments, that they might come and anoint him." But do they hasten back as soon as they have made ready for their last office of affection? Night had overtaken them. It was too late for a return that evening. May they not come early the next morning? They did not, but "rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment." Luke 23: 56. Here is a comment on our Saviour's practice, with reference to that portion of time which had been set apart as holy from the beginning of the human family. Those who were the most like him, who were fearless in following him, would not even go to his grave on the Sabbath; and the simple reason was, the law of God did not allow them to do it. The fourth commandment would not permit their leaving the sacred duties of worship, for a visit, though most piously intended to the resting place of Jesus.

*Change of the day.*

It is commonly believed among Christians, that the Sabbath was changed by Christ himself, from the seventh to the first day of the week; and prophecy, they suppose, had long before pointed out such an event as to occur in the Messianic era. See among other passages, Ps. 118: 22, 23, which "are quoted six times in the New Testament, and expressly applied to Christ."\* The practice of almost the entire brotherhood of

---

\* Dr. Scott.

believers for eighteen hundred years, has conformed to the above named conviction. If any persons cannot be convinced that our Lord did make such a transfer of the time, they should scrupulously adhere to the original arrangement. But they ought to form a community by themselves; at least they should not, while in a small minority, set at defiance the wishes of millions who desire to enjoy a quiet Sabbath on the first day of the week.

If we regard Jesus Christ as the promised Messiah, we can entertain no doubt of his authority to effect an alteration in the time of keeping the Sabbath, demanded by the good of the church, provided there were any such. "For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day." Matt. 12 : 8. In this declaration, made by himself, Christ asserted his absolute sovereignty respecting the Sabbath. That he did change the observance from the seventh day to the first, admits of no reasonable doubt. From the time of his resurrection, the apostles kept the first day as the Sabbath, not as another commemorative occasion, but as the day required by the fourth commandment. Yet a new event was to be celebrated on each return of sanctified hours; the completion of the work of redemption. In the original constitution, the day to be kept, was called the seventh of necessity. Only six in all, had gone before it. We may name ours the seventh, if we please. It is so, in relation to the six which weekly precede it. A seventh part of time, God instructs us to keep holy, and when he clearly draws the line between the secular and the sacred, woe to us, if we do not heed it. But suppose the church to have been honestly in error respecting the proper day, ever since Jesus rose from the dead, Jehovah has not been offended by the mistake. His institution has been honored in all these many centuries. We know very well why some people insist so much upon the seventh day. It is in their hearts to trample upon all the restraints of religion. A few, we admit, may have

scruples about keeping the first day as holy ; this number, however, is exceedingly small. Some have argued, that the time of keeping the Sabbath was changed by Jehovah, to commemorate the egress of Israel from Egypt, and that the day of the week now called the first, falls precisely where the seventh did prior to the deliverance of that people from bondage. With the data on which they base their opinion, I am not familiar. God evidently may, any year, change the day of the week for keeping the Sabbath, without affecting the perpetuity of the institution.

In reference to the change as effected at the time supposed, the argument stands briefly thus : \* Christ was crucified on the day preceding the Sabbath, and arose on the one which followed it, and from the period of his resurrection until now, the first day of the week has been observed as the Sabbath. Can any one doubt the authority of the Redeemer of the world to change the day ? His apostles surely could not have indulged the thought of changing it without divine authority. The terrible sanctions of the law might have fallen upon them for daring to interfere with sacred time. We know, that if they were good men, they could not have made the alteration of their own accord. The idea that they wickedly made the change, cannot be entertained for a moment ; yet the time has been changed. On the evening of that eventful day, when the Lord of glory arose from the tomb, he met with his disciples. In just one week, he was with them again. John 20 : 19, 26. It is probable that he ascended to heaven on the first day of the week, and it is certain, says Gurney, that the Pentecost occurred on it, when the Spirit was so abundantly shed forth upon the apostles, and three thousand others were baptized by its descending influences. The Acts of the apostles, and the epistles, contain accounts of meetings on the first day of the

---

\* For a full exhibition of this subject, see the Sabbath Manual.



week for religious purposes. Moreover, the Christian fathers from the apostolic age, down, are specific in their testimony respecting the observance of the first day. Barnabas, who, if not a cotemporary with the apostle Paul, lived soon after him, says, "We keep the eighth, that is, the one after the seventh, as a joyful, holy day, on which day Jesus also arose from the dead." Ignatius, A. D. 101, Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 192, and Origen, A. D. 230, testify that the first day was observed as the Sabbath. The younger Pliny, governor of Bythnia, A. D. 107, relates that Christians were accustomed to meet on a stated day before light, and "to repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a God." What that stated day was, is apparent from the manner in which the Roman persecutors addressed the victims of their cruelty, viz., "Dominicum servasti? Hast thou kept the Lord's day?" To this was returned the following answer by the accused, "Christianus sum, intermittere non possum. I am a Christian — omit it, I cannot." Justin Martyr, A. D. 147, says, "Christians meet on the day called Sunday, for religious worship." "On the Lord's day, every one of us," observes Irenæus, "keeps the Sabbath, meditating on the law, and rejoicing in the works of God." According with the testimony of the foregoing we have the declaration of the apostle John: "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Rev. 1: 10. That he meant some particular day, differing markedly from ordinary time, is obvious; nor can there be a doubt, what day is intended.

*Is Paul at variance with Christ?*

From an examination of the course pursued by Christ in regard to the Sabbath, let us turn to the writings of the apostle Paul, for in these, some shelter themselves, while treating all days alike. There are two passages in his epistles, which are supposed, by this class, to render *null* the obligations of man to

keep the Sabbath. The first is Romans, 14 : 5, 6, "One man esteemeth one day above another ; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord ; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." The other is Colossians 2 : 16, 17 : "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon or of the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." With reference to these quotations from the writings of Paul, we may affirm : 1. There is no positive proof, that in either of them, *any* reference is had to the day usually designated the Sabbath, for the discussion is about meats and drinks, and the various *festivals* of the Jews, called *Sabbaths*.

2. *No* reference is made here to the *first* day Sabbath, for at that period, it was called "*the Lord's day*," to distinguish it from the seventh day Sabbath, and from other feast days of the Jews. "In the apostolic age, there prevailed a distinction between the name of the first day of the week, and of the seventh. The former was called the LORD'S DAY ; the latter the SABBATH." Chrysostom says, that after the resurrection of Christ, the day to be kept holy, was called by the apostles and the churches, Lord's Day, in honor of the event. A distinguished writer who has devoted much attention to this subject, observes, "That all the later Christian fathers made the distinction just mentioned, need not be proved to any one, acquainted in any tolerable degree, with the ancient writers of the Christian church."

In the apostle's time, there was a set of *Judaizing believers*, who sought to impose upon the Gentile converts, the Mosaic ritual and observances, and it was in reference to such a class of persons, that Paul expressed himself in the passages cited. The context evinces this fact. Judaizers observed the *first* day, and also the *seventh*. "They keep the Sabbath accord-

ing to the Jewish law," says Theodoret, "and sanctify THE LORD'S DAY, in like manner as we do." In the words of an author just quoted, "The zealots for the Jewish law wished the Jewish Sabbath to be observed, as well as the Lord's day, *for about* the latter, there appears never to have been any question among any class of the early Christians."

Such facts as have now been stated, are sufficient to remove all difficulty from Rom. 14 : 5, 6 ; Colos. 2 : 16, 17. Paul did not suppose it impossible for one to be a follower of Jesus, who, in addition to keeping the *first* day, also kept the seventh, though it is hardly probable, that he would have considered any man pious, who refused to observe the *Lord's* day. "That the early Christians never understood Paul, as renouncing the Christian Sabbath, is sufficiently manifest from the fact, that one and all of them held the first day of the week to be sacred. Nothing can be more erroneous, than to represent the ancient church as halting, or divided about the observance of the *Resurrection day*. It was about the seventh day or Jewish Sabbath, that all the disputes arose of a *Sabbatical* nature."

As to the manner in which the primitive disciples kept the Sabbath, light is afforded by ecclesiastical history. Eusebius states, that all nations redeemed by Christ, were accustomed to hold assemblies for worship on the Lord's day. The hours of holy time were as strictly observed by the early Christians, as the Jews were commanded to observe them. "All things whatsoever it was duty to do on the Jewish Sabbath, these," says the historian, "we have transferred to the Lord's day." \*

The writer was favored with correct instruction and example in regard to the Sabbath, from his earliest years ; yet he

---

\* See Prof. Stuart's notes on Gurney, for many of the quotations in this article.

remembers that one man, who came from another State into the author's native town, professed to despise the Sabbath from principle, and he referred to what the apostle says, in the passages upon which I have here remarked as his authority. It cannot be denied, that many have wrested this part of the Bible to their own injury and to the dishonor of religion.

#### MAN'S NEED OF THE SABBATH ILLUSTRATED.

On a certain occasion, Christ declared that the Sabbath was made for man; using this last term in its most comprehensive or generic sense. It was not instituted for the angels, nor for the devil, as some appear to think; nor for this or that people in particular, but like water, air, and light for all the dwellers on earth, without respect to locality, or the period of time in which their existence occurs. Human beings were not created for the sake of the Sabbath, affirms the same infallible authority. Let us, in brief, illustrate the above declaration of Jesus.\*

1. Man's physical frame needs the Sabbath. The rest which it allows from the ordinary cares of the week, is in this respect essential. Persons best acquainted with our bodily functions, testify to the necessity of a day's weekly cessation from secular toils. They are sure, from their own experience and observation, that the Sabbath, as a season of rest from temporal employments, cannot be given up without the most ruinous effects in regard to health. God has so constituted us, that we must cease from ordinary pursuits a seventh part of time, or suffer. Life's resources become exhausted in a measure at the close of each day; they, however, are in a degree restored by the rest of night, but not entirely. The close of the week finds the laborer less vigorous than he was on

---

\* The reader is referred to the Sabbath Manual for some of the authorities in this article.

Monday morning, provided the Sabbath had been suitably observed. But if that day be not properly regarded, its return does not recruit the exhausted energies. Violators of the fourth command are not the most profitable help to employ in the factory ; at the counter ; in the shop ; or on the farm. No injustice would be done, if a distinction were made in the weekly wages of those who do, and those who do not, keep the Sabbath, giving preference to the former. Besides being unable to accomplish as much, those regardless of holy time are reckless. They cannot safely be trusted with important interests ; if not watched, they may ruin whatever they handle. You cannot confide in a Sabbath-breaker any where, for he is destitute of good principles.

It is the testimony of Spurzheim, that "the cessation of labor one day in seven, contributes to the preservation of health, and to the restoration of the bodily powers." Sir Matthew Hale, who had been for nearly fifty years conversant with men of business, and who was a careful observer of the affairs of life, made this statement : "Whenever I have undertaken any secular business on the Lord's day, (which was not absolutely and indispensably necessary, that business never prospered and succeeded well with me. Always the more closely I applied myself to the duties of the Lord's day, the more happy and successful were my business and employments the rest of the week following." Mr. Schoolcraft, who, in company with twenty men, examined the Upper Mississippi in 1830 and 1832, says, "they performed their tours in less time than companies usually do which travel on the Sabbath, though they uniformly suspended labor on that holy day." He was convinced, that they gained much by resting one day in seven. "In the West Indies, slaves were at a certain time required to labor six days in the week for their masters, and the seventh for their own support." Feeble health and short life were the consequence.



A public institution in England, employing two thousand hands, required for a while Sabbath labor, but afterwards, it was prohibited; the result showed that the same number of hands would accomplish more by working six days in a week, than by working seven.

2. The Sabbath was made for man's intellect. In this respect it is of immeasurable value. No one that observes the day as he ought, can be grossly ignorant. Go into a community where the house of God has been uniformly frequented, and you will search in vain among the constant worshippers for those sinning cyphers common in some places. In the words of another, "Ignorance and barbarism form no part of the character of the men who revere the Lord's day. It is impossible to condemn to meanness and obscurity the individual or the community who rejoice in the light of the Christian Sabbath. Carry the privileges of this day to the most abject on the globe, and just in the proportion in which they are subject to its influence, do you elevate them from their intellectual degradation."\*

It is found to be as true of the mind as it is of the body, that it requires a weekly respite from its ordinary avocations. An English gentleman, who had been for fifty years connected with the profession of medicine, and who had, during that time, been in the habit of considering the uses and the abuses of the Sabbath, affirms that, when the mind has been engaged closely six days in a week, it will be injured by continuing that application longer without relaxation. He moreover affirms, that the exercises usually connected with the worship of God on the Sabbath, are adapted to the exhausted energies of the mind.

Wilberforce declared that he could never have performed so much public business as he did, had it not been for the rest

---

\* Dr. Spring; from whom there are other quotations in this article.

which he enjoyed in the hours set apart by the Most High as holy.

3. As a member of society man needs the Sabbath. That human beings should exist in an associated condition, was evidently designed by the Creator. Evil, God abhors, wherever found; that human society has many wrongs is obvious. In order that communities be prosperous, they must be regulated by salutary restraints; and what is so calculated to hold mankind within proper limits as a due observance of holy time? Can a people be very lawless where the Sabbath is honored? On the other hand, is there aught lovely and of good report where this day is despised? Children need such a check as the Sabbath brings to their playfulness. Vigor of body and of mind is requisite, if we would be efficient members of society. It is an observation of Dr. Rush, that, "if there were no hereafter, individuals and societies would be great gainers by attending public worship. Rest from labor, in the house of God, winds up the machine of the soul and the body, better than any thing else, and there invigorates it for the labors and duties of the ensuing week."

*Cleanliness* is essential to the well-being of society. A filthy community must be odious in the sight of Heaven. But what means besides does so much as the Sabbath to purify the villages and towns of our land? Public worship demands that the pollution of the week be thrown off.

There can be no good society where the morals of the people are corrupt; yet, if holy time be not observed, the population of a place will descend to the lowest depths of degradation, while it is clear, beyond a doubt, that a proper observance of the Sabbath will reform a community that has been noted for its irregularities, and will create an orderly and interesting state of things, where previously there was naught but odiousness. It has been eloquently asserted that no villain, that no vicious family, that no worthless and immoral

community, regards the Sabbath ; that this day is a barrier, which must be broken down before men can become giants in iniquity. But "those who pollute holy time will keep nothing pure."

Examine the condition of prisons, and see who people their dark cells. Do not a majority of the inmates confess that they have trampled on the Lord's day ? Gurney, a careful observer of men, affirms, that Sabbath-breaking is the *first step* to every species of crime. Blackstone said, that "a corruption of morals usually follows a profanation of the Sabbath." At one time, it was found that ninety criminals out of a hundred, in the State's prison of Connecticut, had been abusers of holy time. One hundred and eighty-two out of two hundred and fifty-six of those in the prison of Massachusetts, were of the same stamp, nor do facts from other places exhibit a more favorable view. An English gentleman, who had been a prison officer, and who had become acquainted with at least one hundred thousand prisoners, states, that he made it a point of seeing, in private, those who were charged with capital offences, and he does not recollect a single case among them all, where the person had not been a Sabbath-breaker. In reference to prisoners of all classes, he says, that nineteen of them out of twenty have neglected the Lord's day. A person, who had been ten years the keeper of Newgate and six years marshal of the city of London, gave it as his opinion, that nine tenths of all crimes, with which he had become acquainted, were connected with Sabbath-breaking. Lord Chief Justice Hale once remarked, "that of the persons who were convicted of capital crimes, while he was upon the bench, he found a few only, who would not confess, on inquiry, that they began their career of wickedness, by a neglect of the duties of the Sabbath and by vicious conduct on that day."

Every where, the profaners of holy time are in the broad way to ruin ; they are encompassed with ignorance and degra-

dation; crimes and misery are their companions. Their course is to perdition, and hell will soon be their home, if they persevere. All who hate the Sabbath are slaves of Satan, and with him curse society in their daily career. Who can number the hosts of evils brought on communities by disobedience to the fourth commandment? Surely, it would be in vain for me to attempt a specification?

4. The Sabbath was made for man as an accountable being. Our Creator will at length summon us to his bar. His service is our constant duty, and to do his pleasure is the only end worthy of existence. Better would it have been for us never to have had a being, than that we should pass our probation in rebellion against him. Yet, if Jehovah is to be worshipped, there must be set seasons for prayer, praise and the receiving of divine instruction. Even pagans are aware that their religion cannot be maintained without having sacred days. "It belongs to our very relation to God to set apart a portion of our time for his service." We wonder not that infidels are seeking to annihilate the Sabbath, for with its existence is identified the very being of Christianity. Where this day is kept, there, and not elsewhere, is the knowledge of the true God. "Blot out the Sabbath, and you blot out the last beam of hope from the troubled and desponding heart. Blot out the Sabbath, and in one mighty crowd of pilgrims this world's population would march quietly on to the gulf of remediless ruin."

But the full value of holy days cannot be seen till the general judgment shall reveal their fruits. The Sabbath is a type of heaven, and those who delight in it spiritually shall inherit life everlasting. "In short, we are going to spend a Sabbath in eternity. The Christian will acquire as much of the Sabbath spirit as he can." No one who loves hours hallowed by God, because of their sacredness, and keeps them as required, can be otherwise than in friendship with Christ; while the

enemies of such hours are at war with all righteousness ; they are children of the wicked one.

*Who break the Sabbath ?*

If a due observance of holy time be essential to the welfare of man, viewed in his different relations, then it becomes an important inquiry, what constitutes such regard ? or who fail to conform to the divine will in respect to sacred days ? We have only to take the fourth command, and test every practice by it. Obvious is its import. Those break the Sabbath, who perform during its hours secular business, for they do not hallow it. Ordinary occupations are not holy. “Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work ; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God ; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.” No language could more clearly denote a distinction between the duties assigned to the Sabbath, and those belonging to the other days in the week. To repeat a sentiment previously enforced, it is useless to reply that what, in this respect, the Lord required of Israel, is not binding on us, for the table of ten commands is, from the nature of the case, obligatory on all ; they are moral requirements and prohibitions, which cannot be annulled. We may, with as much reason, deny that the God of the Hebrews is the living God, at this age, as that the decalogue is not now the rule of moral conduct. None of that business which belongs to the six secular days, is lawful on the Sabbath. Acts of necessary mercy are allowable, when common ones would be sinful. The sudden conflagration must be arrested and extinguished ; beasts are to be watered and fed ; the sick must be attended ; yet it is obvious that a physician ought not to be called on that day, if the case be not urgent, and that none



should be detained from public worship, who would not be kept from their business by the same sickness on a week-day. Whenever distressing illness overtakes us, we are obliged to yield to its imperious demands ; but it argues no good for one, when he makes his arrangements beforehand, to be an invalid on the Sabbath. Are there not many of this description ? Do not hundreds call in the medical practitioner on the Lord's day, who would not send for him, were it another part of the week ? Am I not alluding to what the reader knows to be a common characteristic in many families ?

Funerals sometimes unavoidably occur on the Sabbath, and in such cases they are not the work of the week ; but when a plan is industriously laid, either by deferring unreasonably the interment of the dead, or by hastening it improperly, for the purpose of bringing the burial within sacred hours to save secular time, God is dishonored. Much connected with these solemn scenes, is unsuited to sanctified seasons. I do not affirm, that, in no case, must a grave be prepared, or a coffin made on the Sabbath, yet, I believe, that instances are rare, in which there is any necessity for such labor.

Something manifestly must be done respecting food, on the Lord's day ; still a moment's reflection will convince any one, that the amount of labor thus required, is comparatively small. He that wishes to feast on things divine, will not be desirous to overload his physical system. A surfeited body will not admit of great spirituality of mind. Whoever indulges excessively his appetite on the Sabbath, will surely be dull. A too hearty breakfast has unfitted many an individual for enjoyment in the services of the sanctuary. And not a few, who feel pretty well in the forenoon, find themselves incapacitated after dinner, for worship. Think you, that God connives at fleshly indulgence on his day ? Why did he make the Sabbath as long as other days, if but half of it is to be spent in sacred duties ? And why does not the sun go down at noon

on this holy day, if every afternoon of it may be spent in slumber? Ah, all this slavery to the appetite, and this surrender of mind and body to drowsiness and dreams, are Sabbath breaking.

The repairing of machinery, the running of mills, the cultivating of the fields, the securing of harvests, and the keeping of accounts, are all forbidden by the law of God, and whoever engages in any of these, is as surely a transgressor of a divine regulation, as is the worshipper of an idol, or the robber, or the murderer; conduct must be all brought to the moral law, and whatever transgresses it, is rebellion against God.

Because Saturday is unpleasant, and the Sabbath is fair, affords no reason why the latter should be taken for the labor which had been planned for the former. When Jehovah wrote with his own finger the fourth commandment, he knew the exact number of cloudy Saturdays, which would be followed by bright Sabbaths; and he also foresaw just how many loads of hay and of grain would be out, and, to human view, in danger of spoiling, while the sun of holy time should be cheering sacred hours; he was likewise well aware how strong the temptation would be for worldly men to gather in their exposed harvest on the Sabbath, yet he commands them not to perform secular service on his day. The fact that he caused it to rain on Saturday, is a sufficient reason why the exposed hay or grain should not be sheltered till after the Sabbath. Doubtless he sometimes intends to destroy crops, after they have been ripened. Allowing that the products of the earth will be ruined by being exposed, why has not the Almighty the same right to disappoint the husbandman in this way, as to do what he often has done, viz., cut off fields of promise by hail storms? Appeals are sometimes made to our Saviour in vindication of what I deem Sabbath-breaking; but careful attention to his course, discovers the fact, that in no case did

he say or do any thing fitted to encourage aught of which the most strict observer of this day would complain.

He performed none but acts of mercy. "It was to relieve the ox or the sheep from present suffering, that he might be pulled out of a pit, or led away to watering. It was to deliver men from present distress, that Christ healed them on the Sabbath. It was because the disciples were *then* hungry, that he excused them for plucking and rubbing a few ears of grain as they passed through a field on their way (it would seem) to public worship." To imitate Jesus in relieving distress is a duty, even on the Sabbath ; but is there not an obvious distinction between the performance of such an act, and one which does not impart immediate assistance? Is it asked what will the poor man do for support, whose harvest is in danger of utter ruin by exposure through the Sabbath? We reply in the words of Scripture, "Trust in the Lord and do good ; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Ps. 37 : 3. Whoever makes the law of God his rule of action, is in no danger of perishing for the lack of food. To offer the plea, that work must be performed on the Sabbath to prevent a future want, is accusing the Most High of insincerity, and tempting him to deliver the guilty over to all the horrors of actual starvation. A certain man who had spent the Sabbath in securing his grain, said, "he had fairly cheated the Almighty out of one day." He even proclaimed his deed as one that should obtain for him the title of a hero. But how must he have felt on the Tuesday following, when the lightnings converted into ashes his gathered harvest, and also the barn which contained it? If we do right, consequences may be left entirely with God ; but if wrong action characterize us, there will be an after part, which cannot safely be disregarded. The Being whom we have offended will hold us responsible.

Another class desecrate the Lord's day, by devoting it in part or wholly to sinful amusements and pleasures; they do

not keep it holy. To make and receive social visits on this day, is not observing it as the Most High requires. Nor does the sin of this conduct depend on the distance passed over in making them. Our *home* is our lawful abode on the Sabbath, during the time that we are not at public worship, or in the Sabbath school. Who can point out the least shadow of holiness in making or receiving a social visit on the Sabbath? We should neither go to see others, nor must they be allowed to come and see us, if it be in our power to prevent. We have a right to enjoy a quiet sacred day, and no person is authorized for sinful ends to disturb us. If our kindred are not aware of the impropriety of hindering our devout observance of the Lord's day, then it is our duty *politely* to inform them. Kindness also requires it of us. In no case is going on social visits, or returning from them during the Sabbath, remembering it as the law demands. All riding for pleasure is open rebellion against God, and merits his immediate judgments. We can frame but one excuse for either of these practices just noticed, and that is the ignorance of the guilty. I suppose in some places there is an amazing lack of information, touching the importance of duly keeping the Sabbath. A conviction that entire darkness prevails on this subject, is a great relief to my mind. Supposing persons to be well informed, then, if they ride for pleasure on the Sabbath, they are as certainly violators of God's law as are murderers. And I am not prepared to say, which class of these transgressors is the most odious in the sight of Infinite purity. We have no right to employ on the Sabbath, for pleasure, or for gain, any creature of God, for he expressly declares that it shall not be thus used. Therefore, to remove one from a pasture, or a stall, is a sin, for which the guilty individual is responsible to the Maker of animals.

I need not specify all the ways in which pleasure is sought, in violation of the decalogue, on the Sabbath. Our ears are



often pained in holy time by the reports from the huntsman's gun, and by the howlings of his dog. Frequently has the writer seen the fisherman with his hook and line, going forth amid sacred hours. Companies of ball players are engaged in many a retreat, and also in open fields, beneath the sun of the Lord's day. Games of chance are carried on to a frightful extent, publicly and privately every Sabbath.

A large class trample on the fourth command, by devoting the Sabbath to various kinds of secular reading. Sometimes the aim is mere pleasure ; at others, it is to acquire useful information ; none who thus spend the day, keep it holy. All of them are perfectly aware, that they cherish no respect for its sanctity. The Bible and religious works are the only proper books for the Lord's day, and every person who means to obey the divine mandate, will be careful about letting his eyes fall upon volumes and periodicals not religious. Many people set apart the Sabbath for writing letters of business, or of friendship. They practise things forbidden, for they do not remember the day to keep it holy. Selfishness has the entire control of their efforts. Even religious letters wear a better heading when dated otherwise than on the Sabbath.

#### *An Inference.*

A system of religious faith, which entirely sets aside the Sabbath, is no better than absolute infidelity. To say that *all days are alike*, is to affirm for truth what the Almighty declares false. Whoever asserts that he esteems *every* day holy, must be regarded in the same light with him that owns he deems *no* day holy. If it cannot be safely said, that there is as much piety as there is *external* respect for the Lord's day, unquestionably the *latter keeps pace with the former*. Blot out the Sabbath, and true religion will become extinct on earth.



Infidels understand this matter, and their deadliest enmity developes itself in efforts against this sacred day. The influence of all, who set at naught or trifle with holy time, is on the side of the vilest opposers of truth. What claim has he, who denies the obligation of the Lord's day, to the reputation of being a Christian? "In proportion to a man's real piety in every age of the Church, he will be found to have been a diligent observer of the Sabbath." \*

Reader, art thou a breaker of the fourth command? If so, thy steps are toward ruin. Sins, committed on the Lord's day, carry the guilty, by rapid strides, toward perdition. Behold, how near thou hast already come. An old writer calls holy days the pillars, "on which heaven's palace arched lies." Thou hast laid violent hands on those sacred supports, and were thy strength sufficient, thou wouldst do with the throne of God, what Samson did to the house in which thousands of the Philistines were assembled.

All persons violate the spirit of the Sabbath, who do not spend the entire day in the service of God, attending on his worship, if his providence permit, both public and private, for he requires that his hours should be passed in such a manner. Holiness consists in loving and serving the one Jehovah. True, those who remain quietly at home, exert a less extensive influence for evil, than they would, if they were running or riding, fishing or hunting; still they break the day of the Lord. "Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary; I am the Lord." Lev. 19: 30. Going to meeting occasionally, just to avoid reproach, will not meet the divine enactment. His house should be loved by us, and we must resort unto it habitually, when it is within our ability to enter it.

---

\* Cecil.

*But one Sabbath in a Week.*

It has seemed to the writer, that in exhibiting proof for the divine origin and perpetuity of the Sabbath, sufficient importance has not been given to the fact, that there are and can be only just so many Sabbaths in a year as there are weeks. God has ordained the keeping of one day in seven as holy, and he has not ordained the keeping of more than one day in seven as holy. His will on this point is made known in the Scriptures — that guide of the world. He did direct the Israelites to observe certain festival seasons yearly, and doubtless he now, by implication, requires his people to set apart days for special thanksgiving, and also days for special humiliation. But no day except the Sabbath is holy. Now one sect says *every day* is holy. By this they mean, as their practice shows, *no day* is holy.<sup>1</sup> Other sects, not going quite so far, have yet multiplied their holy days. What right have they to mock God's Sabbath, by setting up their own? We are bound to obey the command of Jehovah touching his Sabbath; and are we not bound to disobey men's mandates respecting their holy days? Infinite Wisdom has set apart but one day in seven; the wisdom which appoints more, "descendeth not from above." The adversary has as much displayed his hatred of sanctified time by causing men to multiply holy days, as in his attempts to annihilate *the* Sabbath.

Here it is proper to notice a sad mistake into which some Christians have fallen. I refer to the calling of the Sabbath *Sunday*. No friend of holy time should allow himself to designate it thus. The secular days of the week God has not named, hence, when speaking of them, we may, if necessary, employ heathen terms; but his own day, Jehovah has honored with one title, meriting universal and exclusive adoption, unless the Scriptures authorize another. Lord's day was em-

ployed, in the primitive Church, to denote the Sabbath as changed from the seventh to the first day, and doubtless we may so call it; still the original name is that which most naturally suggests the end for which a portion of time was set apart as holy.

## HYMN.

Holy Sabbath; day of rest,  
God Almighty thee hath blest;  
He to man, in Eden's bow'rs,  
First proclaimed thy sacred hours.

Holy Sabbath; all divine,  
Jesus tells me thou art mine;  
Sinai's law must ever stand,—  
Binding is the fourth command.

Holy Sabbath; without thee,  
Man is never, never free;  
All are slaves to Satan bound,  
Where is heard no Sabbath sound.

Holy Sabbath; type of Heaven,  
Dearest day of all the seven;  
I will love thee more and more,  
Till I reach the blissful shore.

## THE SANCTUARY.

People destitute of a sanctuary, are deprived of a blessing, than which none is greater. They have no strong barrier to vice; nothing that will cause iniquity to disappear; nothing to pour the light of eternal truth upon the darkness of error. Wickedness fears not the halls of science; it never retreats through dread of classic lore. Polished society may cherish within its bosom the most loathsome vice. The other idols in a man's heart are dethroned by wealth, only when it seeks to occupy as a god the place of the ejected. A standing army may keep back an approaching foe, but at the same time it

will be a fruitful source of immorality. The idea that any mere human agencies can be a safeguard to a people, has often been proved false. Jehovah has ordained that his temple shall be their bulwark.

It is a beautiful thought which we find expressed in the forty-eighth Psalm, that invading kings were repulsed by the sight of the temple at Jerusalem. "They saw it, and so they marvelled, they were troubled and hasted away." Whether this language be regarded as a historical fact or as a poetic embellishment, it is worthy of candid consideration. There is reason to believe that a full exhibition of the truth respecting the means by which the liberties that we as a nation now possess, were secured, would show us more indebted to our sanctuaries than to any other instrumentality. It was from them that prayers most fervent ascended to the God of the oppressed for his timely aid. Whether or not the blessings of freedom and good government shall be continued to the generations hereafter to arise in this country, will depend mainly on the temples of the Lord. If he is known in *them* for a refuge, our nation is safe. Politicians are ever ready to sell their country's birthright for the sake of a party triumph. A few among them are truly patriotic, but alas what are the many?

We must look to the sanctuary for a regulator of the factions which arise under the flag of reform. An influence goes out from it, laying hold with a restraining hand upon those who would uproot every good institution in the removal of a single evil. Such madmen can be checked by those correct moral teachings which characterize the house of God, if their zeal be not of too furious a nature to admit of any restraint. If it allow no such control, then, being permitted to run with its own speed, it will soon be self-destroyed, or have gone so far as to be out of the way.

Intimately connected with the house of the Lord are all the blessings of civilization. Remove the tabernacles of the Most

High, and savage feet will soon tread the soil on which these holy edifices have been reared, and the Indian's war-song be substituted for the lessons in the Sabbath school. The sanctuary brings peace to the troubled sinner, saying, "Be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." It is an earthly abode of our God. While the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, he deigns to dwell in the house dedicated to his praise. That salvation should flow to men through sanctuaries, is a part of the economy of grace. He that refuses the light coming from them, walks in darkness and stumbles to rise no more. We must worship in the temples made with hands, in order to enter that constructed without hands. Preludes of the songs sung in the latter, are learned and practised in the former. They who have no delight in public worship, are not preparing to join the great assembly above the skies.

Ye holy courts, how precious are the associations connected with you! Safe is the retreat which ye afford; peaceful are the hours passed in your solemn inclosure. Other places of frequent resort are filled with the world, but the Lord fills the sanctuary. In *them* are heard, perhaps, the profane oath and the angry words of the contentious; *here* silence is broken only by the words of worshippers, whose praises and prayers ascend to God.

In the erection of buildings for public worship, there is one general rule which seems to me ought not to be overlooked. I shall express it thus: *Give God the best.* Let his temple be an ornament to the place in which it stands. What can more clearly indicate a semi-barbarous state in a community, than a shattered meeting-house? No people is so poor, as not to be able to keep out the wind and water from the abode of the Most High. There is, at present, in some places, an extravagant outlay in preparing sanctuaries. It seems to be thought that money thus profusely expended will secure Heaven's benediction on the worshippers, even if mere formality is all they



can offer in them. Shut not your doors, ye wealthy pew holders, against the poverty-stricken. "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all." Happy are they who hear the words of Christ and conform to them. "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." To serve Jehovah we certainly need commodious sanctuaries; but more, sincere hearts. Frequently incurable distractions among the members of religious societies are occasioned in locating houses of worship. Great numbers, who had been regular attendants at the courts of the Lord previously to the agitation of this subject, have been offended by it and no more appear in them. Can they enter heaven? Will not their stubbornness send them to hell? We are far from supposing that no mistakes are committed by those who carry their own point in regard to locality. Men are every where sinners. A spirit of concession should be cultivated by all the members of a parish. What constitutes a good site for a sanctuary? Must a spot be chosen simply because it is central? Unhesitatingly we answer in the negative. The house of God should, if possible, be easy of access to the largest number. It should also be as pleasantly located as the nature of the region will admit. Regard ought uniformly to be had, in deciding on a place, to the welfare of those who may succeed the present inhabitants. A general good is ever to be preferred before an individual.

### *Order of Public Worship.*

Those who worship without prescribed formularies, need not fear to vary, when necessary, a long established order in divine service. While we do not hesitate to pronounce the style of church building, handed down to us from our Puritan fathers, as unsuitable to the age in which we live, it ought not to be regarded as a love of innovation, if one suggest that possi-

bly some improvement might be made in the common routine of exercises at public worship on the Sabbath. Were our revered ancestors now to visit the earth, perhaps they would point out desirable changes. There are, however, only slight changes required. If my suggestion be worthy of regard, I would arrange for the reading of the Scriptures in the morning immediately after the first singing, rather than before it, and I would have them read, also, in the afternoon, just subsequently to the introductory hymn. It seems to me that there are decided advantages in both these innovations, if they should be so termed. The house has become still by the arrival of the time thus allotted for the reading of a portion of Scripture. Not long since, I spent a Sabbath, where the ordinary method is pursued, and there was a perpetual coming in, until the reading was nearly completed. I was once in a parish where many of the people were accustomed to stand about the door of the meeting-house, till the officiating clergyman had closed the Bible and opened the hymn book. If we cannot have stillness in every exercise, let us have it when Jehovah speaks. Some congregations are in the habit of standing during the first singing, both in the morning and in the afternoon. If the Scriptures are read according to the improved order, the congregation, sitting while they are read, is prepared, at the close of the reading, to rise up before the Lord, and join in the petitions, thanksgivings and confession for sin, which constitute the prayer.

What part of public worship is more important than the reading of appropriate selections from the Word of God? The addition of this exercise to the common order of the afternoon, has, I believe, greatly interested the pastors and the congregations in those places in which it has been introduced.

Would it not be an improvement, if the prayers in the sanctuary were all more nearly of a length than they usually are, and all so short and comprehensive as not necessarily to weary

those who devoutly engage in them? It is a fact, that many pastors are exceedingly tedious in conducting this part of worship. Complaints are made, even by those who are glad when it is said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord." Some that would be the last to find fault unreasonably, do express the wish, that certain ministers whom they hear, might be less wearisome in this respect. The practice of sitting during public prayer is becoming quite too prevalent, and yet how can the evil be remedied, so long as occasion is thus given for it? As the lovers of a pure and simple form of worship, it becomes us to see that all things are performed in a manner, not only decent, but to edification. May the day never come when our prayers shall be printed, yet let us not be afraid to seek higher and higher degrees of excellence in the precious services of the sanctuary. If, in any particulars, our order of worship need emendation, let us not be afraid to effect a change.

#### *Posture in Prayer.*

Under the preceding head, an allusion was made to this topic. It is not proposed to discuss it here, but merely to state a few facts. The more ecclesiastical bodies discuss the subject, the less agreement appears in regard to it.

Whence originated the practice of sitting during prayer? Is it from heaven? We think not, for the only book on earth, which reveals to man the divine will in respect to it, affords it, we firmly believe, no countenance. On this point, we presume the readers of the Bible are nearly if not quite agreed. Did the Puritan fathers sit while public and social prayers were offered? Who believes that they did? They revered the Divine Being. But *this* practice is not indicative of reverence. On the contrary, it betokens great lawlessness and want of appropriate feelings towards Jehovah.

Whence then the custom ? I will state its origin in some places. In a certain neighborhood, where the "*standing order*" were the first settlers and the chief occupants of the soil, there appeared, about thirty years since, preachers of a disorganizing stamp, and commenced their "labors of love," as their efforts were termed. They were very zealous, and brought their burning zeal to bear against the almost universal custom of *standing* in prayer. Doubts were expressed by them, whether the venerable old minister of the town had ever offered an acceptable public address to God, because he did not kneel. Now this assault did not move the real Puritans, but a class, such as exist in almost every community, gave credence to the sentiment, and ceased rising up before the Lord. But as kneeling is not always convenient, the sitting posture soon became quite common among this sect of new religionists ; and now such is the posture which they assume, or rather maintain, extensively in their sanctuaries, as far as my acquaintance with their practice extends. It is a well known fact, that we have very foolishly adopted some of the customs which belong to other orders of worshippers.

But we are indebted, chiefly, for our departure from Puritan practice in this respect, to another source. Some years since, a great *light* arose in a part of the country then termed the West, and threw its radiance eastward, down even to the shores of the Atlantic. Indeed, the luminous body itself, like the star which gladdened the hearts of the shepherds of Bethlehem, was movable. It took a direction towards the sun's rising, and soon filled the land of the Puritans with wondrous brightness. Such was the effect on the minds of many, that an application of what a sacred writer says, seemed, in their view, appropriate to the very birthplace of the purest saints. "The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up." Suffice it to say, that a new era commenced in

religious affairs, and produced wide-spread changes. Measures unheard of before, became exceedingly popular. Old customs were decried, and nothing deserved religious esteem, which had been handed down from our pious forefathers. The catechism was trampled in the dust; Bible doctrines were rejected or strangely explained; men, women, and children, closely crowded together, were exhorted to cry aloud and spare not. I have seen them in the same assembly, without rising or kneeling, one after another, offering their petitions to God. Such were the circumstances in which the unhallowed practice, under consideration, chiefly originated among the people of my early acquaintance. I am sorry to say, that they have never recovered from the abyss into which they plunged in those days of excitement and confusion, when Zion's beauty became deformed.

#### HEARING THE GOSPEL.

*Hear attentively.*

A marked difference is every where observable in the effects produced by the gospel upon individuals. "To the one, we are the savor of death unto death, and to the other, the savor of life unto life." Far be it from us, to affirm that human agency alone is to be taken into the account, when we seek for a solution of the fact that the same discourse is followed by consequences entirely unlike. Still much depends upon the manner of listening to truth. "Take heed therefore how ye hear."

Of what avail is it, if the word be spoken forcibly and tenderly, if the auditory be listless? In vain are reasonings the most cogent, and appeals the most persuasive, if no mind be awake to attend to them. Neither the terrors of Jehovah, nor the subduing theme of the Saviour's death, affect favorably those who heed *nothing* coming from the preacher's lips. He must



have the attention, in order that he inform the understanding, and move the passions. The hearer should listen to the whole discourse, for if it be well put together, the several parts cannot be separated without destroying the unity. Whatever be the preacher's skill in sermonizing, it is to be presumed, that all he advances is important truth ; therefore, it is " profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Serious fixedness of the mind is essential, if one would hear to any purpose. Of what benefit are mere sounds falling on an external organ ? They make no permanent impression, if the soul be not a listener. That curious instrument the ear, is only a medium of hearing ; itself does not hear. We know that a person may be so absorbed in meditations, as not to regard what is said within hearing, on the most important subjects. We can sit for hours in a room, where a loud striking clock faithfully tells the gliding twenty-fourths of the day, without perceiving one of its strokes. We must admit that every sound of its little hammer falls on our ears, but the mind being intent on something else, does not heed its tones. Those familiar with the almost deafening noise of machinery, become accustomed to it, and are unaffected by it. One may even live amid the roar of Niagara, and not realize its presence.

We see, then, considering the subject in a philosophical light, that attention must be given to what is spoken, in order that it be heard with profit. Thoughts can be in one place, and the person in another. " Take heed, therefore, how ye hear ; " cause the *mind* to listen ; do not allow it to escape from the sacred place while holy exercises are progressing. Concentrate on the truth there presented the best energies of the soul. " We should covet earnestly to know the true intent, and full extent of the word we hear, that we may be neither mistaken nor defective in our knowledge." Surely the end, in this case, justifies the means.

No preacher of the gospel is able to interest those who will not take some pains to receive information. Angelic eloquence would not suffice to render such a class wakeful. The hearer must be anxious to receive instruction, or it will not be in human power to do him much good. No preacher supposes that he shall greatly attract those who do not interest themselves, and yet he may without arrogance think, that all, whose attention is duly given to him, will be enlightened and richly rewarded for their zeal in seeking illumination in the house of God. Something worthy of regard, relating directly or indirectly to man's welfare in time and eternity, is uniformly presented on the Sabbath in the temples of Jehovah. If nothing more deserve careful consideration, the exact words of Scripture, interspersed in every discourse, merit profound consideration. To yield a strict attention to truth is the duty of each attendant on divine worship. Christ's ambassadors ought not to be taxed with the drudgery of keeping open men's eyes, and of calling back their fugitive thoughts. Efforts should be made by every one in the congregation, to create a more lively feeling in the speaker, which may be easily done by *looking at him*.

Ministers of the gospel are not unfrequently accused of contradicting themselves. Now, as they are fallible, it is not impossible for them to commit such mistakes ; generally, however, the charge proceeds from such a source, that it is not entitled to credit. He, that catches only here and there a sentence, is not qualified to judge of the merit or demerit of a sermon occupying thirty minutes in the delivery. Be sure, ye captious ones, that ye hear the whole, before ye venture to criticise even a part, and do not boldly assert there have been numerous contradictions, while it is evident you slept four fifths of the time. Dull hearers are not good judges of preaching.

*Hear without Prejudice.*

We are creatures of impulse, and more inclined to be influenced by it than by fixed principle ; to be swayed by passion, rather than by understanding. Very common is it for condemnation to be pronounced upon a minister of Jesus, when no good reason can be assigned for even a surmise against him. Christ said unqualifiedly to his seventy disciples when he sent them out to teach and to preach, "He that heareth you, heareth me ; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me ; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." Luke 10 : 16. Terrible is thy doom, thou contemner of truth ! "Whoso despiseth the Word shall be destroyed." They cannot escape divine wrath who refuse to hear the messages of God, because delivered by individuals with whom themselves are not pleased. Jehovah's communications must be regarded, whoever is the bearer.

Prejudice not only shuts up the mind of him indulging it against particular persons ; it has the same influence touching certain doctrines. Instead of meekly inquiring what is truth, those under such an influence determine beforehand not to regard some doctrines as true. Should a preacher announce one of them as the subject of a discourse, the sound thereof might operate as an expeller of a portion of his audience ; and should a voice from heaven fall upon the ears of those escaping, saying, the doctrine, from which you are endeavoring to flee is divine, and will meet you at the judgment, their course would not be reversed, nor their speed abated. Prejudice sends them forth, and will not permit them to return. This baneful moral malady debarred many from hearing words when spoken by the sinless lips of Jesus. Persons swayed by prejudice are characterized by bitterness and bigotry. They lack all nobleness, and are easily made the dupes of errors ;

becoming subjects of the grossest superstitions, they doom to perdition all not equally involved in darkness.

“ O love-destroying, cursed bigotry !  
Cursed in heaven, but cursed more in hell,  
Where millions curse thee, and must ever curse ;  
Religion's most abhorred ; perdition's most forlorn ;  
God's most abandoned ; hell's most damned ! ”

An individual under the influence of prejudice seizes upon circumstances of a trivial nature, and magnifies them into those of the highest moment. Such an one, forgetting the beam in his own eye, is enraged at the mote in the eye of another. Casting his own great sins behind his back, the little faults of others he multiplies, and magnifies to the utmost extent of his ill will. Divest yourselves of prejudice, all ye who would secure divine favor, and be profited by hearing the word of the Lord. You are not required to receive aught as truth without careful examination. “ Prove all things ; hold fast that which is good.” Listen to every portion of a discourse ; detect all the false premises and illogical conclusions ; expose the sophisms, and point out the real contradictions, but do it with pure motives. No servant of Christ will be offended at kind corrections.

*Hear to receive the greatest Profit.*

The grand design of the gospel is to make men wise unto salvation, and every one, at all considerate, will desire to gain the wisdom which it aims to impart. All the scriptural truth, delivered in the sanctuaries of God, is of everlasting importance. It is the good seed, which, when falling into suitable soil, bears fruit unto life eternal. By the word of the Lord we must be enlightened, or we remain in darkness. Despatches

which descend from the court above, are essential to man's well-being on earth, and in the future state.

A cavilling spirit does not become a poor mortal, while contemplating the communications made to him by the Lord. It should be enough for us to know, that what we are hearing was uttered by the Holy One for our good, and that immediate obedience to all commands is required by him. Famishing persons ought thankfully to accept of food provided, without waiting to ascertain whence it came ; nor should they hesitate to receive it, because they cannot tell precisely *how* it imparts nourishment after it is taken into the system. So ought creatures cursed by iniquity to seize eagerly for their good the bread of heaven. A sick man were foolish indeed, to decline receiving proper remedies, because the science and practice of medicine are beyond his comprehension. Common sense bids him without delay accept proffered aid.

Sinners are fearfully diseased, and relief comes only through the gospel. Christ is the only Saviour, and without his saving help, they must perish. A present opportunity is all of which we have any promise. If it be unimproved, and none other be granted, then is heaven eternally lost. Who should not feel that now the pearl of priceless value may be secured, and yet that it may be suffered to pass forever from his reach ? "Take heed, therefore, how ye hear." Do not listen for others, but for yourselves. Make no special appropriations of a sermon to your neighbors ; take it home, for it belongs to you. The Lord has directed his ambassador to make proclamations to you, and fail not to hear now what the Almighty saith. Has reconciliation been already effected between you and the Sovereign of the universe, then there are comforting communications for you. If transgression still holds you, hasten to secure deliverance as he counsels.



*Hear with Gratitude.*

It should be regarded, as it actually is, a great privilege to be made acquainted with divine truth. God is not benefited by the means of grace furnished to man ; his happiness does not depend on the preaching of the gospel, nor is it affected by our treatment of his mercy. Jehovah will be glorified, whatever be the conduct of creatures toward his compassion. By transgression we are destroyed, and our destruction admits of no remedy except in the holy and benevolent scheme of the triune God. Shall it not be regarded as a privilege to be informed how we may be saved from hell and elevated to heaven? What but the gospel affords the needful instruction? Who, besides the *hearers* of the truth, can be made free by it? Verily, were those to whom salvation is preached duly aware of the immeasurable mercy proffered to them, they would every day utter heartfelt praise to Him who has opened before them the ark of safety. They would require no urging to present themselves in the temple of the Lord on the Sabbath ; nor would it be necessary to caution them against dullness ; the soul's deep emotions could not suffer their eyes to be closed, nor their ears to be heavy. Surely a wakefulness, not to be easily overcome, should always evince a hearty joy in being brought so near to heaven as they are to whom the gospel is weekly published.

*Hear with the Last Judgment in view.*

Probation's hours, now swiftly gliding, will soon be passed away, but the consequences of our sojourn in time can never cease to be felt. An account must be rendered to the Judge of all the earth for the use made of sacred privileges. In the book of God's remembrance are recorded the discourses with

which we are favored, and the manner of our attending to them. Each truth heard will be a witness for us or against us, in the day when every heart and every life shall be revealed.

Our Lord, in his parable \* of the sower, beautifully exhibits several sorts of hearers. "The seed is the word of God," some of which falls by the wayside, and those thus designated, "are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." A portion of the seed lights upon a rock, by which the great Teacher sets forth a class that receive the word with joy, but, having no root, exercise only a temporary faith, "and in time of temptation fall away." Other seeds lodge among thorns, and in this emblem are symbolized those, who, "when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection." The seed, however, is not all lost, for some of it drops into good soil, and bears fruit "an hundred fold." On this part of the parable, Christ's own interpretation is strikingly pertinent to our present theme. "But that on the good ground, are they, which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." Those thus described are preparing to reap awards of delight at the right hand of God. In the day of final recompense, they shall not be ashamed, but their fruits will appear in perfection and richness. "Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it." While keeping it they are kept by it, and, through it, as the instrument, they are made savingly and eternally wise. Good ground hearers have an eye constantly on the day of accounts, and remember that to whom much is given, of them much will be required. They do not selfishly seek a

---

\* See Luke, Chap. 8, for the ensuing quotations.

reward, yet it is their aim so to improve their talents, that the impartial Judge may say to each, "well done."

Let all accustomed to enter the temples of Jehovah, take heed how they hear the gospel. Give attention ; banish prejudice ; hear to profit ; be grateful for the privilege ; remember the judgment day ; seek help from Him who is infinitely able to make the truth more precious to you gold. The Spirit that inspired the Scriptures is ready to illumine your minds, and to enable you to be like the good ground.

"Sinners, will you scorn the message,  
Sent in mercy from above ?  
Every sentence, O how tender !  
Every line is full of love ;  
Listen to it—  
Every line is full of love."

#### *The Sabbath School.*

How shall this institution be made to answer the end for which, in the providence of God, it seems designed ? By what means can its usefulness be promoted ? When does it occupy a proper position in the affections of Christians ?

1. Sometimes the Sabbath school is estimated too highly ; its relative value being over-rated, more is expected of it than is reasonable ; hence there follows a disappointment, and a consequent discouragement, also a relaxing of the effort necessary to sustain it. In certain places, this means of grace has been elevated by superintendents and others above the pulpit. Such an estimate is wrong, and the result of it is necessarily unfavorable, for these schools merit no such pre-eminence.

There are pious parents, who have confided the religious instruction of their children altogether too much to this institution, and the reflex influence of the school's failing to accom-

plish what was expected of it, has in some instances induced a withdrawal of their support.

2. Generally, the Sabbath school is not estimated so highly as it should be. The origin and continuance of this religious enterprise, must be ascribed to the special providence of God. It can be made instrumental of immense good to Zion, and should be regarded as a part of the great system of moral machinery, brought into use by the Head of the church. If it be not considered as justly claiming a position of gospel dignity, and as being worthy the prayers and labors of the entire company of believers, its prosperity is of necessity limited, and may be destroyed. If pastors and a large proportion of the communicants turn away from it, or only look at it occasionally to avoid rebuke, then the school will decline in spite of every effort made to sustain it.

3. Churches ought prayerfully to ascertain just the place, in their affections and in the services of the sanctuary, which belongs to this branch of sacred duty. There certainly is a part of the Sabbath which ought to be appropriated to the exercises of the school. Probably, the precise time may vary in different localities. In the country, it seems most proper that schools should be convened as soon as possible, after the close of the morning's public worship. Having been present where it was held at an hour previous to divine service, I have invariably felt that to be an unsuitable season. Nor has it ever appeared to me useful to engage in the Sabbath school just before we enter upon the regular services in the afternoon. Perhaps there can be no harm in holding the school in a basement vestry, or in a building distinct from the house of God ; but we must not send it out of the holy place, as if it were not worthy to be there. Let Christians, yea, let the whole congregation feel, when the morning benediction is pronounced, that the great God is to be worshipped in a manner somewhat changed, yet acceptably. The intermission should always be

sufficiently long to accommodate the school, and to give time for refreshment and rest, before the afternoon preaching commences.

Pastors should identify themselves with the Sabbath schools, so far as they are able to do it, and not be unfit for their peculiar duties. I would by no means countenance the suggestion made by a minister, that perhaps one of the regular services should be given up for the sake of it. Clergymen are wont to say, that they cannot preach as required, and also spend a season each Sabbath in the school. They surely can, if God require them to do thus. Not one of them may have strength to instruct a class, and yet cannot most of them frequently cast their eyes over all the classes? Half an hour devoted exclusively to a lesson, is perhaps sufficient at any one time.

4. We should discard from Sabbath schools all expedients and experiments of a doubtful character, relying for success upon God and not upon human artifice. Let facts, serious, instructive facts, be communicated occasionally, especially at the concert for prayer; but away with mere story-telling. Children should be made to feel that the Sabbath is a holy day; that all its exercises are inspected by the eye of the Omniscient. I would offer no premiums to excite the ambition of a scholar, but endeavor to impress upon his mind the great fact of his accountability; for the judgment is not too far off to be made influential on the minds even of children. Still the faithful may be commended and encouraged by religious presents. Questionable, in my opinion, is the attempt to hallow the anniversary of our national independence by Sabbath school celebrations on that day. Why should we wish to divert that occasion from its civil and governmental associations? It commemorates the birth of this republic; and we ought, as a people peculiarly blessed, to remember the struggles of our fathers, and the merciful interposition of God. We should rejoice to see whole towns assembling on the fourth of July, to



celebrate, in a *religious* way, the praises of Him, by whose aid our arms were victorious. An effort, however, to rescue that day from its abuses, by school celebrations, must prove a failure. Let children and youth march in the procession. Let them wear a badge, but do not let them suppose that they are to assume the control of the anniversary. Let them rather go forth as the younger members of the community, to enjoy variously, though innocently, the delights of hours dear to every true republican heart.

5. The responsibility of the teacher's office must be appreciated by all seeking the welfare of the Sabbath school, or the institution will languish. No one can instruct well, who has not thoroughly mastered the lesson. A natural adaptedness to teach, is desirable ; yet as perhaps only a few persons in any community are endowed with it, great pains are requisite to acquire ease in communicating instruction. Meetings for teachers are indispensable, and these should be conducted, if possible, by the pastor, under whose eye ought to be the entire school. What an amount of supplication to God, is every week demanded, in order that this institution be made the means of salvation to the thousands within it. Ye who desire to be honored as agents of eternal good to souls, pray unceasingly for the Sabbath school, and do with your might every duty in it.

#### THE MINISTRY.

Amid the ruins of sin, the Lord is rearing a kingdom, which though in the world, it is not of it. The foundations thereof were long since laid, and the superstructure has been constantly, yet gradually, going up. It is one in all the stages of its advancement ; but there have been connected with it two dispensations. The first commenced at the beginning of the enterprise, and continued till Shiloh, or the Messiah came ; that

which is not to be superseded by another, began as the second, when this glorious personage ascended to the throne mediatorial, and received as King in Zion, the government of the kingdom of heaven established upon earth. His rule will be continued till the world is reclaimed; "For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." For the extension of this holy empire, is employed the Christian ministry. "It pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." Christ is the author of this agency, and no man has a right to assume its functions, who has not been divinely called as was Aaron. There are certain requisites for entering upon the duties of the sacred office, destitute of which, no person has a commission to go forth as a preacher. "Unto the wicked, God saith, what hast thou to do, to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldst take my covenant in thy mouth?" To thousands, whose piety is pre-eminent, a call to minister at the altar has never been extended by the Head of the Church. A good heart, though indispensable, is not the only necessary preparative for the work. Much mental discipline is demanded by the nature of the service ere its responsibilities are undertaken. That long course of study prescribed by the most intelligent sects is quite brief enough. Whoever hastily attempts to fill the sphere of an evangelist, may sooner or later find that his want of consideration has proved his own disgrace, and an injury to the truth. Exalted is the ministerial office.

He that would ascertain what estimate is placed upon the sacred calling, by the Spirit, is invited to contemplate such representations as the following: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, thy God reigneth." Isa. 52: 7.

*The title Bishop.*

In the first epistle of Paul to Timothy, it is said, "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." To ascertain definitely the attributes of such an office, we must inquire into the import of the term bishop, and that the conclusion of our investigation be in accordance with the mind of God, we must resort to the Scriptures. The common meaning of the word *ἐπισκοπος*, translated sometimes in the New Testament, *bishop*, is inspector, overseer, guardian. Ancient uninspired writers apply the term to those to whom is intrusted the oversight or guardianship of treaties, laws, wars, public works, cities, etc. Minerva, the patroness of Athens, was the *ἐπισκοπος*, bishop of that city.\*

The magistrates sent out from Athens, to govern her provinces, were designated *ἐπισκοποι*. In the writings of the apostles, this word *ἐπισκοπος* is one of the titles of a minister of the gospel, who had the care of a church committed to him. The classes of ordinary officers in the churches, which the apostles established, were uniformly only two, as their language evinces, and these were pastors *ἐπισκοποι*, and deacons *διακονοι*. The pastors are called *elders*, *presbyters*, and *bishops*. The two former appellations are from the same word in the original, *πρεσβυτεροι*. Elders and presbyters, then, in the Apostolic Church, were officers of equal grade. But in those churches an elder and a bishop are one. In the 20th chapter of Acts, 17th verse, we read that Paul sent from Miletus to Ephesus, and called for the elders *πρεσβυτερους* of the church, and in the 28th verse of the same chapter, addressing these elders, he calls them bishops. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath

---

\* See Lexicons of N. T. Greek, also Bible Repository, Vol. IV., p. 254, seq.

made you overseers, *ἐπισκοπούς*, to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." According to an inspired apostle, then bishops are simply pastors of churches. He, however, affords us more light respecting bishops. Writing from Rome to the church at Philippi, he specifies three classes: the saints, that is, church members, the bishops, and deacons. Phil. 1: 1. The bishops were evidently pastors at Philippi. In Titus, first chapter, Paul beyond a doubt uses the terms elder and bishop as synonymous, as a comparison of the fifth and seventh verses will show.

We have then the scriptural import of the title bishop. When applied to man, it designates the pastor of a church; hence, it is easy to understand what his office implies, for it is that of a pastor; just such as every ordained minister, who has been installed over a church, holds. We may use the term interchangeably with that of pastor or presbyter, just as do the Scriptures. It is the opinion of some Christians, that this biblical title should be commonly employed to designate him who has the religious oversight of a people. But since those who arrogate to themselves the peculiar right to it, often prove themselves unworthy of it, there might be danger in giving others this pleasantly sounding epithet. Christ's ministers are all on an equality, except as age, piety, and learning, necessarily make a species of distinctions. Those who are told that their church has no *head*, may reply, we have one even Jesus. "For ye were as sheep going astray; but now are returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." 1 Peter 2: 25.

#### THE PASTOR.—*His first duty.*

My design is to consider the minister of Jesus in his relation as an under shepherd or *bishop*. And of him it may be said that he occupies a position higher than a throne, and sus-

tains responsibilities greater than are imposed on any other man. The relations borne by him, to a church, demand his time and best attention. If the field in which he labors be too contracted, the Lord will, in due time, enlarge it; or will transfer him to another, provided he is faithful in the sphere first assigned. Every minister of Christ will be furnished, by his Master, with work enough through life.

Entire consecration to the ministry does not preclude the examination of all subjects, not strictly religious, if attention to them in no way interfere with a faithful discharge of the duties of the pastoral office. The weekly study of mathematics, or of ancient languages, may greatly assist the pastor, by invigorating and expanding his intellectual powers. Indeed, some attention to secular branches of study is absolutely essential. But, in all his plans, whether relating to journeying or reading, or any thing else, his aim ought to be, the best performance of *ministerial* labor. Nothing should be allowed to interfere with his holy pursuits. So devoted must he be to sacred services, that not only the inmates of his own house, but all who know him shall feel, when in his presence, that he is *full of divine thoughts*. Every where and at all times, he should be regarded as preëminently a man of God. The Sabbath is the great day of salvation; and the appointed means of grace being the preaching of the word, the week should, ordinarily, be spent in preparing for the return of sanctified hours.

No man can be well qualified to instruct others who is not himself a constant student. The inspired charge runs thus: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." What is here commanded, must be an habitual practice.

We affirm, boldly, that to rise before an audience, in the sanctuary, without special preparation, except in those instances when the providence of God has prevented it, is not



merely wrong ; it is abusive to the hearer and trifling with divine things. " I always thought it to be a most awful thing to go into the pulpit, and there speak nonsense in the name of God.\*

If a preacher can attract large congregations without study, he is bound to be as much more efficient than now, as fidelity in preparing for the Sabbath can render him. Is one a hundred times my superior, while he makes no *special efforts*, he is bound to increase that superiority to the utmost degree attainable, by diligence in mental application. " I use notes as much as any man, when I take pains ; and as little as any man when I am lazy or busy, or have not leisure to prepare. It is easier to us to preach three sermons without notes than one with them."†

The ministers of Christ are required by him to *improve* their talents, and to do this, they must tax themselves with study daily ; and, especially, be frequently on their knees, seeking light and grace from the infinite Source. The pastor should, in all things, magnify his office, " giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed ;" striving to shew himself " approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

### *The Example of Paul.*

In the course of his ministry, the apostle Paul visited Corinth, a large and celebrated city of Greece. The locality, his discouragement at first, and subsequent success, the occurrences after his departure, and the triumphant vindication of his own course when he was assailed by a false teacher, render that place conspicuous among the communities where this zealous servant of the Lord proclaimed the doctrines of

---

\* President Davies.

† Richard Baxter.

revealed religion. The city stood on an isthmus, from which its own name was derived, and, being thus located between two harbors, it held a central position in the civilized world. Merchants from all countries met in it and exchanged their articles of traffic, so that the wealth of the nations flowed into Corinth. In it were the celebrated games, called Isthmian, from the site on which they were acted, and these added fame to the city. All the arts which minister to convenience, luxury and ornament, there reached a very high degree of perfection. The eye, the ear, the taste and the passions rejoiced in the ever present profusion provided for each.

Schools of rhetoric and philosophy were established there, and instructed by able masters. Such was the concourse of those seeking wisdom at this fountain, that the city was thronged with the learned and the skilful. Cicero termed Corinth "*totius Græciæ lumen*," the light of all Greece. Morals, however, were as bad as possible. Neither philosophers nor rhetoricians effected any thing favorable in this respect, but the reverse. Universal scepticism also prevailed. The temple of Venus, with its thousand priestesses, was, under the sanction of religion, a patron of the worst practices. The vices, not less than the wealth and wisdom of the world, centred in this renowned city; and to affirm that an individual was living after the manner of its inhabitants, was a method of designating an abandoned course; that is, "a profligate life was commonly called a Corinthian life."

Such was the place and the people. Thither, guided by the Spirit of Christ, Paul came to publish salvation. His first efforts were with the Jewish residents; but these violently opposed him and "blasphemed," when shaking his raiment and saying, "Your blood be upon your own heads," he turned to the Gentiles. Encouraged by a vision from the Lord in the night, he continued in this city a year and six months, preaching the word. Having founded a flourishing church, he obeys

the divine summons to go elsewhere. But scarcely has his departure occurred, when attempts are made to overturn the faith of believers. A false teacher, an ambitious, deceiving Sadducee, enters that field of apostolic toils. In order to ingratiate himself into favor with the people in general, he denies those doctrines which were repulsive ; and that he may control the church, he seeks to withdraw all attachment from him who had instrumentally raised its members from their degradation into a Christian society. This man insinuates that Paul had neither mental nor physical ability sufficient to be an apostle ; "his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible." Some there, as in every church, were unprepared to withstand artifice ; these were deluded. Others, however, remained firm, and deputed certain individuals to go, bearing with them a written communication to him who was their spiritual father. The result of that wicked attempt to destroy the church at Corinth, was overruled so as to promote exceedingly the interests of true piety, not only at the time, but in every age subsequently, even to the end of the world. Paul's Epistle, written to meet the exigencies of the case, is an invaluable discussion of principles, conjoined with admonitions and exhortations needful in all communions of the saints.

I desire clearly to exhibit the apostle's own declaration concerning the matter and manner of his preaching at Corinth, and to show the importance of his course there, being imitated by all those who preach the gospel. His statement is in these words : "For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified." He would have the Corinthians understand that his thoughts and language were not of a peculiar cast, because of intellectual sterility. We hear him by implication affirming, I have acted from principle. I came to you in the way just described, because such was my object in going to your city, and continuing there for eighteen months. I was shut up by a sense of duty to avoid

the very course which now the false teacher is pursuing. I purposely shunned "that nice choice and arrangement of words, that artificial rounding and disposition of periods; those rhetorical connections, transitions and figures; and those studied tones and gestures in which, according to the Greeks, the perfection of eloquence consisted."

In schools of celebrity the apostle had been taught; among the orators of the isthmus there was none more eloquent than he; but he went not thither to show human learning; he sought not to gain the ear by rhetorical exhibitions. "My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom." To display himself was none of his aim. He had but one object, and that was to exhibit Christ and him crucified; and in the accomplishment of this, he did not attempt to catch attention by "splendor of diction or by ingenuity of reasoning." An *atonings Saviour* was the centre, in which all the lines of his discourse met when declaring the whole counsel of God.

What herald of redeeming mercy should not pursue the same course? Did not as powerful inducements present themselves to the mind of the apostle, to use his great powers of intellect in some literary or scientific sphere, as ever tempt his successors in the ministry? Fine opportunities, doubtless, there were for him to have distinguished himself as a writer, debater, philosopher and rhetorician. Could he not have won the esteem of the learned and the influential, by engaging with them in seeking human distinctions? Guided by grace, his conclusion was as himself states; and ought he not to be a model for all gospel ministers? Is not a plea for a different course necessarily based on erroneous premises?

Jesus Christ and him crucified should be the absorbing theme of every pastor and licentiate in the sacred calling. Proof of the correctness of this position appears in the nature

of the ministry. I cannot enter into a protracted discussion of this profound theme, but may be allowed a few hints.

1. The design of the ministry is to instruct the world in the doctrines of Christ; to make them known to every creature. Our Lord did not command his disciples to go forth and teach the nations eloquence, philosophy, and astronomy. They were not commissioned to establish schools of science, or to devote themselves to the arts. Intellectual education will indeed result from the faithful exhibition of revealed religion, but Jesus and him crucified must be the subject of the preacher, or he will overlook the trust committed to him. He is primarily concerned with mankind in their immediate relations to God manifest in the flesh.

2. So great is the theme of the preacher, that it demands the application to it of the entire powers which the Creator has imparted to those divinely called into the ministry. Christ and him crucified! How deep and high; how exalted and far reaching this subject! The whole counsel of God is embraced in it. No truth of revelation is disconnected with it. The Bible is full of *Him* who came to bear our sins in his own body on the tree. Strange is the idea that a little thought will suffice for this sublime and infinite topic. They to whom it seems trivial, know not the beginning of its greatness; have never beheld its outlines.

3. What Paul made his sole theme must fill the mind of the minister, or he will become *morally* unfit to discharge the duties of his office. The pursuits of ambition do not encourage spiritual emotions, but tend to eradicate them. A high degree of devotional feeling is requisite in order for a clear and strong apprehension of the doctrines of the Redeemer. The study of theology cannot be very successfully prosecuted in any department of it, without fervent piety. Cold, abstract views of God are comparatively worthless; but especially does the successful contemplation of Jehovah made known in



Immanuel, depend upon a heart glowing with heavenly love. No other profession so much requires an undivided application to it, as does that which he has chosen, who serves at the altar. One must daily live in the temple of gospel truth, or be almost a stranger there. It will not suffice to step into it now and then. With much fasting and many prayers, from month to month, and year to year, his home must be within it. How can an individual, (though ranked among the sacred heralds,) who has been participating in the strife of a political caucus, or is enthusiastically borne away in a presidential campaign, guide a sinner to Jesus? What moral fitness has the preacher for the holy place to which he is summoned, after he has passed six days in legislative halls? And, thou speculator in gold, thou trafficking pastor, listen! The sacred walls about thee are crying out in vengeance. A guide to souls! Alas, not to heaven dost thou lead them, but to hell, whither they will speed their way fast enough without thy forerunning influence.

Paul at Corinth wrought a little with his own fingers at his juvenile trade of tent-making. Wherefore? So that he might know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. He diligently waited for the Lord to open the door; his zeal was to make the most of his ministry. Unlike to him, in a degree as great as possible, are those who refuse to enter an open field of usefulness, because pecuniary temptations allure them another way. How great and happy a change would Zion soon exhibit, if all the ministers at her altars would know nothing but their Master crucified. Too much the thoughts of many preachers are secularized.

Gold and silver, houses and lands, mines of minerals and mines of combustibles attract not a few of them altogether too strongly. Some we perceive are borrowing trouble, not merely about the morrow; their solicitude extends to the next generation. Whence this zeal in procuring life insurances? Has

Jehovah ceased to be the widow's God and the Father of the fatherless? Must the ministers of Him who had not where to lay his head be hunting after fortunes for their posterity?

4. It deserves serious inquiry, whether many of the *reforms*, as now conducted, are not pernicious in their influence upon the sacred office. Is not their tendency inevitably to divert the pastor's mind from the apostle's course? Never was there a greater renovator of society than he; even devils fled before him; yet he only carried out in every place the resolution at Corinth. He never appeared otherwise than a preacher of the gospel, which, faithfully proclaimed, will, as its appropriate effect, eventually destroy every social and moral evil. All nations shall be purified by the doctrines of the cross. No other instrumentality has been started by God; none beside is to be expected from him. What has the world ever gained by Christ's ministers becoming political agitators, or, in the technical sense, moral reformers? The church must weep and put on sackcloth, when her sons, whose place is by the altars, are away with the excited multitude. Fidelity in his pulpit will enable the pastor to move his people, and *thus* shall evils be removed, yea, the world be blessed, by zeal inspired through his attention to his own appropriate work.

5. Paul's resolve at Corinth should be strictly adopted, for only by so doing can the heralds of the cross save themselves from all hurtful mistakes in the discharge of their duties, and deliver their hearers from hell. Let them cling, as did the apostle, to Christ and him crucified, and they will never be found indulging in vain speculations. New doctrines they will reject, because of their newness; for scriptural truths are old; they are immutable. Man's proud spirit loves to soar high and dive deep; but to indulge this tendency, evinces both wickedness and weakness. Cease, ye servants of the Lord, from attempts to fly with mere waxen wings. Try no more the experiment.

Oh, let it be impressed upon your hearts and engraven upon your memories, ye ministers of my God, that sinners are never saved by hearing essays on the fine arts, nor by sermons on the sciences. Lectures on geology, and botany, and mineralogy, and astronomy, do not lead men to repentance ; nor does that preaching which fails to make Jesus and him crucified its one great all-absorbing theme. The Lord holds you to the course of the apostle, and woe to him departing from it.

6. Whoever has entered the ministry, adopting and adhering to the apostle's resolution, will never lack topics for discourses. To such an one, the Scriptures, from first to last, are little else than a glowing account of the Lord Jesus. He is seen in prediction, and in the numerous types and institutions, the beginning of which was early, and their continuance down even to the great sacrifice on Calvary. The law and the prophets meet in him ; yea, they emanated from him. No marvel should it be if some who attempt to preach, find themselves without themes. They have not entered the region of living waters ; the bread of heaven has never been rained upon their field ; the gold mines do not lie within the compass of their travels. Both preacher and hearer must perish, unless a new era opens in their history.

We feel constrained to point them to a special exhortation of the King who reigns in the holy hill of Zion ; " I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." When Christ is not beheld in the Bible, but very little of spiritual interest is therein discovered. He is, in fact, so completely the subject of this volume, that it is impossible to perceive much of value if he be unperceived. Hard is thy portion, thou nominal preacher, who art ready to glory in any thing rather than in the crucified Saviour ! Down from that pinnacle, thou bold presumer !

Thinkest thou to instruct men how they may inherit eternal life, when unknown to thee are the first requisites for entering the path to heaven? Salvation does not come from the hills, nor from the valleys. Flowers do not exhale it, poetry cannot create it. Christ crucified is its only fountain.

"Most wretched, most contemptible, most vile  
Stood the false priest, and in his conscience felt  
The fellest gnaw of the undying worm!  
And so he might, for he had on his hands  
The blood of souls that would not wipe away."

7. All ministers of the Gospel who determine to know nothing among their hearers save Jesus and him crucified, are far from decrying human learning. Such heralds of the cross feel the need of the best mental discipline attainable. They desire to enforce truth with unlimited energy and zeal. Christ is a theme which "deserves, invites, and inspires, the strongest fire of the orator." In extolling him, "we cannot shock the most delicate taste by overstrained hyperboles. Here the climax rises till it is out of sight; our imagery cannot be too strong and rich." While it is wholly out of place to preach science or to display literary acquisitions in the sacred desk, he makes a bold venture who undertakes to unfold to his fellow-men the wonders of redemption without having first gone through a long course of disciplinary studies. No amount of scientific or literary acquisitions can make a gospel preacher, yet such attainments are necessary. Doubtless the apostle was truly thankful for the peculiar opportunities which he had enjoyed to acquire secular knowledge before he was called into the service of the Redeemer. He surely never decried his acquisitions. Every page of his writings illustrates the benefit he derived from a severe course of mental discipline.

8. Those who know nothing, save Christ and him crucified, will perform most zealously the work assigned them. It is their joy to herald divine truth as fast and as far as possible.



They have a lively sense of the soul's value, and of the adaptedness of the gospel to secure its regeneration and sanctification. In no other way does the importance of salvation become so clear, as when contemplated in the light of what has been done to furnish it. Sinai's thunders overwhelm with terror, but the groans of Calvary proclaim the soul's infinite worth. Arithmetical calculations about the undying spirit do not much impress our minds. If we realize that Jesus died for us, then shall we, if ever, earnestly flee to him for the new heart and the new spirit essential for admittance into the heavenly state. Sabbath services are never cold and uninteresting, when the religious teacher is devoutly near the cross. Nor do the secular days of the week draw the heart of such a minister away from his Master. Every where the duties of his profession are remembered and honored. Daily he asks for mercy, that the perishing among his people may become saints of the Most High. His is not a mere Sabbath-day preaching; perpetually he extols the Saviour. Fidelity renders the gospel herald a burning and a shining light in all his dealings with men.

In a farewell address to one people, the apostle Paul said, "Remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every man night and day with tears." Will not the imitators of his faith, copy also his untiring zeal? Nay, can it be other than true of them, as the Redeemer said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up?"

9. One aspect more of this subject requires a moment's regard. I refer to those innumerable influences which tend to lead the mind from that constant fixedness upon the atoning Lamb of God, which should characterize every public servant of Jesus. What a multiplicity of calls! How easy it is to spend one's whole time in unfitting himself to preach. Perhaps the apostle was tried as much as any one in this age, but it is scarcely conceivable that he should have been, yet we do



not suppose he was free from allurements. Divers now are the arts of the adversary, to lessen, if not to destroy utterly the usefulness of Christ's ministers. Truly, with him whose resolve we have now contemplated, each humble pastor will request of the flock of God an interest in their intercessions. Let the prayers of the church be fervent and unceasing, that the under-shepherds may know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified. And thou, the Sanctifier, baptize anew and daily the proclaimers of eternal truth. O, save them from every influence pernicious to their profession.

*A Second Specification in regard to the Pastor's Duty.*

Having devoted himself entirely to his profession, the pastor should trust in God alone for success. Neither the preacher of the gospel, nor the word delivered, possesses saving efficacy. *He* is as destitute of ability to heal men's souls, as Moses was of power to divide the Red Sea.

I would not liken divine truth to the rod that was extended at the direction of Jehovah, as a signal for the waters to separate; yet, I presume that rod was not more *certainly* devoid of power to act upon the liquid element, than is truth *alone* to affect, savingly, the sinner's heart.

The rock, afterwards smitten, and from which flowed a flood, to quench the thirst of man and of beast, was not less impressive by the word of Moses, or the instrument with which he smote it, than is the moral nature of human beings, by the mere art and persuasives of the preacher. Were the pastor as eloquent as is the Holy Ghost, he could not renew a heart; for eloquence has no attribute by which to effect a moral renovation. Such a work is the peculiar prerogative of the third person in the Trinity.

Any confidence reposed in the hearer, as if he might make himself a regenerate nature, will be disappointed. Though a

thousand *new* hearts be made by sinners, they never secure to themselves, by mere efforts of their own, holy hearts.

Much is said of improvements in the science of theology ; as if preachers in our day have great advantage, in this respect, over their predecessors. But where is the evidence of a favorable change? Alas! we are sickened by the oft-repeated boastings which we have heard of this nature. A *new* divinity is not, of course, Bible divinity, and the converts made to it, or by it, are not such as inherit the kingdom of God ; for all heavenward-bound persons embrace the old-fashioned scriptural theology, which the fathers in the church held and taught quite as successfully as do any in this age of self-glorying. In the millennium, it is thought bonfires will consume the works which explain and defend every sort of *new* divinity.

Sinners will not come to Christ, as a consequence of being flattered in respect to their ability. The more they are thus treated, the less inclined are they to seek salvation. Multitudes, of late years, as facts show, have been greatly injured by certain views of ability, denominated new, which have been held up before them. Discourses, setting forth, exorbitantly, the sinner's power to work in himself that which is good, have exerted a most baneful influence upon the religious state of the world. The impenitent appear to regard themselves as able to do what evil spirits would not dare attempt — *dethrone the Almighty*. So far has the late preaching of moral ability been from making saints of sinners, that it has rather caused the latter to feel that saintship is not very desirable, and that themselves can do as they will on earth, and enter heaven or not, at pleasure. God is powerless ; they are wonderful in strength, omnipotent to do or not to do, whatever they may please, in reference to their souls.

The preacher of the gospel should ever feel that he can no more raise up to spiritual life, by any act of his own, one,

dead in sins, than he can restore to natural life the corpse, from which the breath is gone, and that there is no regenerative power in the unrenewed. It requires the infinite Spirit to regenerate the soul of man, as certainly as it does Omnipotence to revivify a lifeless body. Let, then, the pastor trust in God alone, for success in the holy business of proclaiming salvation, if he would not destroy those committed to his charge.

*Some Dangers attendant on the Pastoral Office, specified.*

I shall now specify a few of the particulars, constituting *the dangers* which beset the path of every pastor.

1. He is in danger of dwelling too much on the darkened prospects of Zion, and thus coming to feel, whenever a cloud passes before his eyes, that the sun in the heavens is actually losing its power to shine ; or, when a little disturbance occurs in the limited sphere of his observation, that the foundations of God's everlasting throne are giving way ; or when one who has held the sacred office, betrays his trust, as if rebellion had broken out in the army of angels, and that Messiah would be compelled to devote all his energies to quelling it. He is liable to ruminate so much on *little* matters, as to be thrown out of his orbit by the force of a feather, or to be greatly impeded, if not driven back, by the feeblest opposing current of air. A pastor, who does not reflect much on the *great things* of the kingdom, will be often in trouble from those that are trivial in themselves, and, on any account, scarcely worthy of notice.

2. He is, on the other hand, in danger of being elated with a small degree of success ; yea, of rejoicing in the works of his own hands, rather than of glorying in nothing save the cross of Christ. Perhaps he will be consoling himself that the Lord's vineyard is greatly beautified by his efforts, when the visitant angels are actually weeping over his remissness. Few

pastors, it is feared, set their standard of effort sufficiently high, or consider the amount of toil which the gospel demands. Some of them seem not disposed to be very anxious, whatever may transpire.

It is an age of amazing activity, in the affairs of the world, and there must be a corresponding energy in divine pursuits, in order to success ; and the Lord's ministers should *lead* the sacramental hosts in all the enterprises demanded by the truth. Moreover, it is an era of luxurious living, and of excessive devotion to fashions. The holiest among the watchmen of Zion are not beyond the reach of temptation ; but an habitual indulgence of the appetite, or a yielding to the numerous calls of folly, breaking as they do upon his ears, in every direction, will be ruinous to a minister's character. Fashionists are unfit to enter pulpits. A fop merits the contempt of all sober-minded persons. Poor, the pastors of churches usually are, yet possibly some of them have indulged a tendency to extravagance, in food, clothing, and household furniture.

Who, more than the heralds of the cross, need vigorous constitutions ? Alas, how many of the shepherds of Israel, are feeble and dull. Why should not the careless hearer sleep, when the voice of the speaker is as lulling as the gentle murmurs of the rill, and his thoughts are as destitute of energy, as are the mental efforts of a fainting person ?

Once, in by-gone years, it is said, that people resorted in great numbers to the sanctuaries, on purpose to hear the truth, and, in some places, they would listen to a discourse of two hours in length ; now, in respect to the majority of a community, it is true that they must be *drawn* to the house of God, and *held* there, or they are not seen at all within the holy place. Monotonous tones, and dull performances, will not suffice in these last days of Satan's triumph.

Shall the pastor congratulate himself, that he is safely and honorably through the Sabbath, because he has spoken to a



little company, when, as a matter of fact, hundreds, within the sound of his own church-bell, have not been affected at all by the services? yea, while card-playing, visiting, riding and manual labor, have been prominent characteristics of a multitude, within his parish limits? O, the preacher ought to be alarmed, if the community be not moved, each Lord's day, by the gospel, proclaimed in its midst. Let those, who will not yield to truth, be excited by the pastor's fidelity to oppose it. Wrath, aroused in consequence of pungent preaching, is far more encouraging than stupor.

3. Danger attends the important duty of visiting a people. A class almost entirely neglect this branch of pastoral labor; their only parochial calls are made upon the sick, and upon those who have sent them a special invitation. One thing, however, is certain. The success of the gospel, in nearly all places, depends, very much, upon the fidelity of a minister, in going from house to house.

Select congregations may be gathered in cities, without this species of effort. But even the elect ones, constituting such an assembly, will complain, and justly too, if they are not visited occasionally by their spiritual guides.

It is an *essential* part of the pastor's service, to acquaint himself with the individual religious necessities of his flock. A physician acts as wisely, if he do not examine the symptoms of his patient, as a minister of the gospel does, if he do not search into the moral state of his hearer. A large proportion of persons cannot be reached by mere pulpit performances. Furthermore, we owe it to our flocks, to enter often their dwellings, sympathizing with the afflicted, rejoicing with the prospered, reproving the erring, and counselling the desponding. Prayerful, personal interviews, God blesses to the present and eternal well-being of those who receive them.

The danger does not, however, lie all on one side. Nothing should interfere with a careful preparation for the Sabbath.



A pastor may be *too fond* of spending his time among the people. It is possible for him to love the social interview more than he does close application in the study, and to err in this direction, is a *greater evil* than to be over-much devoted to intellectual efforts. *He* is soon despised, who spends all his time, during the week in parochial touring. A very great degree of familiarity, on the part of a minister, induces contempt from his flock.

4. The pastor is in danger of being indolent, and woe to him if he be not diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit.

The constant pressure, which is generally felt, by those in the sacred profession, will not, of course, make them truly laborious. One may see so much to be done, that he will conclude to do nothing as he ought. "What man on earth is so pernicious a drone, as an idle clergyman?" The fact, that a discourse, when once delivered, may be of no farther service, exerts perhaps an unfavorable influence upon minds naturally slothful. There is a class of works denominated *helps*, which doubtless prove, in numerous instances, great hindrances to mental advancement. Alas, there are those, who use these crutches, who should walk without aid. They lean upon others, and by so doing, they confess themselves weak.

5. Another danger arises from a ruling love of study. Here the evil is, that scientific and literary avocations absorb the time and strength, which ought, chiefly, to be devoted to the closet, and to preparation for the sacred desk. The love of human distinction, we fear, carries captive some of the watchmen of Zion. Praying and preaching they cast into the shade. What a constant running to deliver literary lectures! Do the ministers of Jesus feel themselves honored by being associated with the vilest infidels in the land? Surely their Lord is not thus glorified! Intimately connected with this evil, is another, if the two can be separated. Parishes must be abandoned, for the sake of seeing foreign lands. It should give us joy, that

God is bringing, as it were, all parts of the world into mutual acquaintance. May He overturn and overturn, among the nations, until the moral, intellectual, and physical condition of the entire globe shall become familiar to all enlightened minds. We are thankful that a goodly number of Christ's ministers, from our land, have traversed the old world ; yet, there is danger that a voyage to Europe, or a year in Germany, will utterly ruin some of the standard-bearers in the sacramental army. Our objection is not to the going, but to the end too often sought.

6. A danger, which, perhaps, more than any one previously named, threatens the pastor, is neglect of the Scriptures. Mere philological investigations do not insure a knowledge of divine truth. A man can understand the grammar of the Scriptures, and still be ignorant of their spiritual import.

All preaching is not *biblical*. Yet no other ever benefits the souls of men. We have heard of discourses, which had nothing but the text, to remind the hearer that they claimed to be sermons.

The word of God, in its deep spiritual import, is probably now less apprehended by Christians in general, and by hundreds of evangelical ministers, than it was half a century since. *We go about it, and leave its depths unexplored.* Hence, our piety is not deep ; we do not melt before the cross.

"We want men of *hot hearts* to tell of the love of Christ," said a converted Chinese ; and is it not true in America, that such persons are needed to speak of redeeming love ? But is there not a fearful deficiency among us in this respect ? Are there not cold hearts in great numbers of the pulpits every Sabbath ? I fear all the exercises are sometimes conducted without religious heat, sufficient to melt a moral snow-flake. Of many a preacher, it may be affirmed, he is cold, cold, very cold ; but a mere round of services does not meet the wants of his auditors. They need to be aroused, and must be, by the

speaker, or they will sleep. He that enters the pulpit at this day, depending on his audience for inspiration, will be a dull performer in the house of God. Christ's ambassadors should present themselves before the people prepared to create an interest. The sanctuary ought to be known as the place where men are *moved* to reflect on heavenly themes. "Let the preacher's head be stored with wisdom ; but above all, let his heart so feel his subject, that he may infuse life and interest into it by speaking like one who actually possesses and feels what he says." Give the people light ; give them also heat. Enough, and more than enough has there been of preaching, which is as destitute of warmth as are moon-beams. It has been said, that "a wise minister stands between practical atheism and religious enthusiasm."

To secure the hot hearts needed, it is in vain to visit Germany, or other foreign countries. Nor can they be obtained by speculations on "*new divinity*." Neither will the arts of logic and rhetoric produce them ; God alone can give them, and his servants must seek to Him for them. Sailing around the earth, exploring distant lands, gaining acquaintance with the wisdom of other climes and ages, seeking the highest accomplishments afforded by science and literature, are all well in their place ; but the ambassadors of Jesus should know that the duty assigned them by their King, is so to unfold the gospel that multitudes shall be saved. For this end they must have *hot hearts*.

#### *The Support of Pastors.*

Salvation is free to the penitent and believing. No man has a right to wall up the way to the fountain of life. The office of a bishop ought never to be accepted, for the sake of accumulating property. But those preaching the gospel must somehow be provided with the necessities of an earthly existence ; they are not to expect a miraculous support.

The caption above brings up a subject which is always occasioning much uneasiness, ill-will, discussion and distraction in religious societies. I will trouble my reader with only a few suggestions concerning it.

1. If generally pastors are receiving *too much* salary, they ought to be willing to receive less. *Too much* may be an evil to them not less serious than is a deficiency.

2. A parish ought not hastily to conclude that their minister is receiving more than a sufficiency, because some individuals refuse to help support him. How can "*signing off*" \* diminish his actual necessities? Does it in any way enrich him?

3. When a salary must be reduced, all the transactions relative to it should be characterized by candor and dignity. Do not treat a minister of Jesus *ungentlemanly*, because you are about to take away a part of his subsistence. If you must starve him, do not first stone him.

4. An attempt to *expel* a pastor by withholding from him his due, is not only wicked, but it would be an act unworthy even of devils. Every circumstance connected with the *removal* of an ambassador of Jesus from a particular charge, should be arranged with care. "Not with eye-service as men pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

5. While some are regarding the salary of their pastor as *too high*, it would be safe to ascertain whether it be not *too low*, and ought not to be raised with as little delay as possible. Let the truth be exhibited and permitted to speak out emphatically.

---

\* Members of religious societies, long established in some parts of New England, need no explanation of this phrase. To those unacquainted with its practical operations, I would say, that, like the *veto* power vested in the President of the United States, "*signing off*" may be at times a necessary resort, though the instances calling for its exercise are not common. So associated with proceedings, neither Christian nor manly, has this term become, that when we hear one has "*signed off*," we immediately consider him less than half a man.



6. The same nominal sum has a different value in places but little removed one from another. Some people are liberal, making presents of hundreds of dollars yearly to their religious teacher. Many parishes would sooner slander their minister, than send him even a basket of fruit. As an instance, suppose three pastors are settled within the circuit of a few miles; the stated salary of each is six hundred dollars annually. While one receives just that sum, another gets seven, and a third eight hundred dollars in the course of twelve months.

7. Facts, if consulted, would show, that pastors of churches are paid less in proportion to their expenses necessarily incurred, and the service rendered by them, than is any other class of persons. Perhaps this is right; it may be decidedly wrong. Moreover, not a few of Christ's servants are greatly embarrassed from the beginning to the end of the year.

8. It is worthy of prayerful inquiry, whether God is not displeased with his people for quarrelling so much with his ministers in regard to their salaries. Professors of religion, while luxuriating in wealth, are sometimes anxious that their pastor should lessen that almost insignificant sum, which he expects to receive, as his only means of living.

9. Would it not be well for Christians to appoint yearly, a day of fasting and prayer, just before the time arrives for their parish battle, in order that God may be consulted in reference to the approaching important struggle?

10. May Jehovah enable the heralds of salvation to preach the gospel out of love to men's souls, and not for an earthly compensation. They should all be able to say, "For the love of Christ constraineth us." O privilege exalted, to publish abroad the name of Immanuel. *Prize* it, ye who possess it, and persevere, though ye have no where to lay your head at night.

"How beauteous are their feet  
Who stand on Zion's hill,  
Who bring salvation on their tongues,  
And words of peace reveal."



Yet it is certain that no community will long prosper, in which religious institutions are not supported with due liberality. At the same time it is evident, that no man is suited to the sacred office, who will not himself make the sacrifices most clearly demanded in saving mankind from hell. Let pastors and parishes give themselves to prayer, with respect to this, and every matter of duty. Surely an end ought to be reached in this protracted controversy, relative to the feeding and the clothing of the Lord's prophets.

#### *A Mournful Fact.*

It is quite common in a *parish* for the remark to be made, that there is "*no tenement*" for the minister of the gospel. Perhaps he has been settled among a people as their spiritual shepherd for years, and all that time, like a certain *dove*, has found no rest for the sole of his foot. A pastor, not long since dismissed from an able parish, had preached in it more than half a dozen years, yet all the while he was subject to inconvenience for want of a suitable dwelling, when one might have been provided with great ease. A good minister, now in heaven, was tossed about from year to year, in a prosperous community, because the society to which he ministered would not fulfil its agreement to erect a parsonage. While I am writing, there are scores of Christ's servants, pastors of wealthy churches, perplexed exceedingly, because no comfortable habitations are furnished them. A catalogue of facts on this subject might easily be collected, at the recital of which, both the ears of every hearer would tingle, unless the listener should himself be of the guilty party. Why should those whom the Lord employs, be hunted about in a place, till they are driven out of it, as if they were devouring beasts from the woods? If a parsonage be built, the probability is that it will be a standing proof of *contractedness*, or, at least, it will differ decidedly from

the expressed wish of him who is expecting to occupy it. Some part will be unfinished, and perhaps it will be amazingly *incommodious*. Not unfrequently these edifices are distinguishable by their manifest want of *paint*. Rents, too, are often unreasonably high.

This subject demands a careful investigation. A young man is ordained and installed over a church and society. His salary is definitely fixed. He is unmarried, and has a right to remain so, for his people have not pledged themselves to support another. But should he prefer to enter the marriage state, himself and companion require comparatively but few rooms. If the gliding years add to the number of his household, still, if he choose, he may live, I do not say comfortably, in close quarters, at a trifling expense. Such, however, is the relation of one church to many others, that parishes are expected to be honorable in providing hospitality for certain public meetings which necessarily occur. Hence, the pastor's house must be quite commodious for the sake of the people, but not primarily on his own account. Now, who should meet the cost of these accommodations, which every religious society is expected to afford? Shall the pastor be subject to one or two hundred dollars' rent, yearly, to save his parishioners the opprobrium of being considered parsimonious? Why ought not societies to provide for their own company at their own expense? Or, if they feel that he who has been appointed to watch for their souls, can wait upon visitors better than themselves, they should not compel him to do it without means promptly and abundantly provided.

Occasionally, after having been harassed to the utmost that health or patience can endure, a clergyman proceeds to provide a shelter for himself. This he does at the risk of being routed from his field of labor, before his plan is executed. It seems to be thought, if the man of God is allowed to possess a home of his own, to expel him, when such a measure shall seem

desirable, will be too difficult. It has become a proverb, that when a pastor begins to build himself a house, he is soon to be driven off. With deep seriousness and solicitude for the welfare of Zion, we ask why are parishes so cruel to ministers of the gospel? It sometimes seems as if all with whom a pastor trades, are in hot pursuit of his last shilling. Church members would do well to be a little more cautious how they allow themselves to treat their spiritual shepherds. The Lord will curse those who trample on his ambassadors. As they are received, so is he. Abuse heaped upon them he regards as done unto himself. As illustrative of the feeling on this subject, which should ever characterize a people, I give an extract of a letter, which I received some years ago from an aged widow :

“It has been a time of trial here, to me and many others. We have feared that we should lose Mr. —. But the salary has been made out by subscription, and we expect he will remain with us another year. I never before had such a sense of the importance of having the gospel statedly in a place, as I have had of late. It appears to me that we do not make half sacrifice enough for the cause of God. I had rather deny myself of any earthly good, than to be deprived of public worship. I feel as if I had a great burden taken off my mind, for the thought of Mr. —’s going away, and of our being left without the preached gospel, troubled me, and my eyes have been held waking; but, blessed be God, he has not left us yet without witness that he has not wholly forsaken us.”

A parish is quite willing to conclude its minister is rich, though there are the most unquestionable proofs that he is poor. But suppose he is “well off;” it will do his people no hurt, but much good, to make him occasional presents. Kindness, expressed in tangible tokens, has a decidedly favorable influence on themselves as well as on him. The nature of the pastoral relation appears to be but poorly understood in this

day of distractions. Ministers are men, but their *office is sacred*, and to treat it with contempt is to incur most fearful guilt. How can revivals of religion be expected, while *such narrowness* of feeling and action as is now exhibited extensively towards pastors, is permitted to remain? Mighty God, thou seest the people devoured by covetousness.

He who has been set over a people as their chosen watchman, does not stand to them in the relation of a hired man. If he were such before his installation, that transaction changed the *nature* of his connection with them. The union between a church and its pastor more nearly resembles that resulting from the marriage ceremony than any other connection. *Settlement for life is the true method*. What is gained by a frequent change of ministers? Candidates should not seek hasty ordination, nor should religious societies tolerate such a practice. Many a church has been all but ruined by casting off an able, faithful servant of Jesus, because he possessed not every possible excellence.

#### *A single Instance.*

Out of a multitude of cases, in which the evil of banishing a pastor has been incalculably great, if not utterly incurable, there will here be presented but one. It relates to an individual, whom more than twenty times twelve months ago, the writer was accustomed to hear preach with great solemnity, clearness, and fidelity. In the religious *factions*, resulting from those most pernicious measures introduced into the churches about the fifth of a century since, this servant of the Lord was driven from that field of toil, which he had occupied for quite an extended period of time, that his place might be supplied by some one who should either attract by his new manner, or rather who would fall in with the false notions then prevalent respecting revivals. More than a score of candidates having

been employed, a young man was settled. In less than a year he did not please the people so well as the former pastor had done, and he too was quickly set afloat. Then an elderly man, not perhaps quite so far advanced in life as the original minister, and by no means equal in ability, was installed. By a sudden stroke of Divine Providence he soon passed away to his reward. Another preacher was called, who accepted the pastorate; but constant broils rendered his stay so uncomfortable, that after an unsuccessful effort to heal divisions he left. For years it seemed as if God had sent fiery serpents into that ungrateful church. That excellent above named shepherd being banished by man from the fold given him by Christ, removed to a retired place, where his labors were much blessed.

#### REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

A revival of religion. This form of speech is employed to designate that happy period in a community, when the Spirit of God is so poured out that Christians are extensively awakened, and transgressors in goodly numbers are brought from the death of sin to a life of holiness. In discussing this topic, two points will receive special attention; one of which has reference to the *importance* of revivals, and the other to their *source*.

##### *The Importance of Revivals.*

That every community needs the frequent special out-pouring of the Spirit, no reflecting disciple of Christ can doubt. Look at the state of a church which has not for a long time been thus favored. Both the shepherd and his flock are suffering exceedingly. A painful degree of coldness characterizes all their sacred services. Those appointed to lead the sacramental host, are free to admit the impossibility of discharging



satisfactorily to themselves the duties of their holy calling, when the Spirit has long been absent. At such times it is difficult to urge the mind to those high intellectual efforts, demanded of the preacher. The world in a great measure takes possession of the believer's heart, and with an impetuous current sweeps it away. Members of the church, who once seemed the most devout, and whose faithfulness was a constant encouragement to the pastor, as also a uniform witness for Jesus, sink into a dreamy remissness. Already far removed from the cross, every week they recede still farther. Though they may not actually join with the revilers of truth, their indifference to it betrays a most unworthy condition of heart. It becomes painfully evident that closets for secret meditation and prayer are affording but little if any relish. Social religious meetings are wholly deserted, or attended by only here and there one. Even the services of the sanctuary are frequented more as a matter of ceremony, than as precious interviews with Heaven. Saints may be seen joining with sinners in amusements neither dignified nor profitable. Or if held in check by a general opinion, they may be heard anxiously inquiring, why they cannot be permitted to enjoy themselves in those pastimes which they ought to know have been for centuries consecrated to the devil. Those spotless robes wrought by Immanuel, for the beautifying of his beloved, are neglected by those expecting soon to wear them, while these same heedless professors are eager for the gaudy, unbecoming plumage of earth. In seasons of religious declension, there is a vast deal of running on the part of Christ's nominal disciples, which does not look towards the attainment of the celestial prize; and there are profuse expenditures, not, however, for the procuring of the precious spikenard, wherewith to perfume the person of Jesus. No lavishments seem too great for the flesh, while the spirit is constantly exclaiming, "My leanness, my leanness." In no respect is the Redeemer loved by these

heartless communicants with the strength of affection, his due, or feared as the greatness of his wrath demands. Many who once had affirmed their willingness to die with him, now, in actions, if not by words, avow their ignorance of him, yet they do not weep bitterly when reminded of their aggravated guilt. They do indeed go out from the presence of their reprover, but it is not for the purpose of mourning, but of murmuring. Doctrines more precious than gold in the estimation of the humble disciple, are made subjects of cavil by lukewarm professors; and duties, transcending in importance all mere earthly obligations, as much as eternity outweighs time, are set aside by the most trivial concerns of the flesh. Ah, fearful is the catalogue of omissions, and of commissions, chargeable in these gloomy seasons to the account of church members. "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." We read in the Scriptures of a class who covered the altar of God with tears, yet were not accepted because of their formality and hypocrisy. Sad, truly, is the spiritual state of that people, whom the Lord repels from his own required ordinances. "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." As in the days of Moses, so now the nominal servants of Jehovah make and worship a god of gold. Amid the awfulness of a spiritual dearth, the Lord appeals to his erring people in such terms as these: "A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master; if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear?" "O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee?" Jeremiah's lament over the church in his day, is strikingly applicable to every religious community which has not enjoyed a revival for a series of years. "The ways of Zion do mourn, because none come to the solemn feasts; all her gates are desolate, her priests sigh, her

virgins are afflicted, and she is in bitterness." How impressive the figure — every particle of dust in the path leading to the house of God in mourning; each paving-stone covered with sadness!

Contemplate now the condition of the impenitent in a place long deserted by the marked manifestations of the Spirit. Accessions are indeed made to the visible fold of Christ when there are not extensive awakenings among sinners, and we believe that the King of Zion is able to subdue the world to himself by a gradual process. It ought to be expected that means divinely appointed would always be attended by an encouraging degree of success. Each Sabbath should witness instances of conviction and conversion wherever the gospel is preached. "Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Both the pastor and his people lack faith, if they do not confidently expect great good to be accomplished on every returning Lord's day, as the direct result of privileges then afforded. What right has a minister of Christ to conclude beforehand, that the result of his efforts on a particular occasion must be nothing? God is able to bless at all times. Why should we affirm that he will not do it immediately? Truth is the same from week to week. How do we know that divine promises are not on the eve of an accomplishment, just at the hour when human foresight perceives naught but a want of success? "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa. 55: 10, 11. Ministers of the gospel, like Thomas, need to hear and regard the injunction of Christ: "Be not faithless, but believing." John 20: 27. Alas, it is

so uncommon to anticipate marked results from the ordinary performance of sacred duties, that, should a sinner be struck down by an arrow from the Lord, when no revival exists, the event would amaze even the preacher, under whose ministrations the case might occur.

It is a fact, that the majority of those numbered, from time to time, with the servants of Christ, are hopefully renewed in seasons of special interest, and it seems to be God's economy to enlarge Zion chiefly by revivals. Only when these powerful displays of the Spirit are witnessed, are we constrained with joyful surprise to inquire, "Who are these that fly as a cloud and as the doves to their windows?" When righteousness is rained upon a community, a few weeks suffice for the return of many prodigals to their Father's house. When the Spirit of the Lord pervades an extended community, hundreds are excited to hear the gospel who had wholly neglected it; and what must become of such a class, if no marvellous manifestations of the Holy Ghost are made in the region where these hide themselves? Behold the aged sinner. Is not his case entirely hopeless, if a revival do not encompass him? Nearly has he reached the termination of his earthly career; the lamp of life has almost expired, and before him is naught but darkness eternal. When our thoughts turn to him, we are reminded of that solemn passage of Scripture, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to evil." Yet there is ability in God the Spirit to subdue the most obdurate and to humble the proudest, and, in revivals, there frequently are monuments of mercy selected from those who have grown old in transgression. We must set no limits to the power or the purpose of sovereign grace.

So engrossed in worldly cares are the middle-aged, that the Spirit must fall mightily upon them, or their souls will remain enslaved to the flesh and the devil. Hardly a



gleam of hope lights upon their case, except as we think of the all-conquering influences displayed in revivals of religion. In what community can the condition of unconverted youth fail to excite the most fearful apprehensions in the minds of Christians? Generally, the unregenerate who are now in the morning of their earthly existence, appear to be intent upon going to perdition. Every expedient possible is contrived by them to hasten themselves onward to hell. They seem to desire to be as sure of being damned as they are of dying. How rapidly is this class departing from time! Short, verily, is their career in the giddy scenes of dissipation. Not a few pass from the ball-room to the bed of death, and thence, who can doubt, into everlasting burnings? Scarcely less appalling is the moral aspect of the little children who are at present coming upon the stage of life. It is only as a very rare instance that one is under suitable parental restraint. Profaneness is a common sin with the young in nearly all places; nor do less awful habits, of other kinds, stain their juvenile persons. Surely, if the Lord do not soon pour out his spirit and turn the hearts of parents to their children, we may reasonably infer that he is intending to curse the earth with one of the most violent generations that have ever trodden upon its soil or polluted its air. With what intense solicitude should the mother look upon her little ones, and contemplate their future destiny! O, should they be left to spend their probationary course where no revivals of religion arrest the progress of sinners, these now apparently harmless lambs will become giants in transgression. There are many other considerations, beside those already presented, which show a need of the outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Let these precious seasons no more bless the world, and whence will come heralds of the cross to preach in this and foreign lands? Even now the walls of Zion, in its most favored sections, are not well supplied with faithful watchmen. It was on the memorable pentecostal



season that the church received its first mighty impulse after the opening of the new dispensation. Such scenes as that, not in its miraculous characteristics, but in its blessed effects upon the hearts and lives of thousands, must gladden the saints, or moral desolation will settle upon all the future prospects of God's Israel on earth.

*The Source of Revivals.*

Every good is from God ; and those rich displays of grace, denominated revivals of religion, are the greatest benefaction which he now can bestow upon mankind. The sending of his own Son to die for sinners was an unspeakable gift. Also the communicating of his will to his rational creatures in that volume designated the Bible, was a blessing greater than the intellect of mortals can fully estimate ; but these celestial boons, having been provided, what can we so much need beside, as the descent of the Spirit in showers, which renew, beautify and sanctify the souls of transgressors ?

1. God can grant a revival whenever his wisdom judges best. There is no limit to his ability in this respect more than in any other. Perfectly independent, and ever doing according to his will in all the vastness of his empire, he can show his sovereignty just as he pleases in converting the unfertile moral waste into a fruitful field ; or, in leaving it as a desert, where grows no green thing. This power of God the Almighty to perform wonders of mercy, seems ever to have been recognized by his servants. It was anciently their joy when dreariness reigned all around them, to feel that help could come from the everlasting hills. We behold them lifting their weeping eyes, and hear them raising their imploring petitions to the Lord of salvation, as the only resort from present calamities occasioned by sin, and from those impending judgments which ever are threatening a guilty backslidden people. Whoever

carefully reviews the Old Testament pages, will find numerous instances in which Jehovah did revive his own work in the midst of the ancient years, and that he often made known his glorious saving power when his saints were fearing and deprecating his wrath. The New Testament presents before us, on its first leaves, the record of a most wonderful revival. Scarcely had the harbinger of Jesus gone out to preach, before the Spirit, attending his ministrations, brought thousands to renounce their sins and commence a new life. Who has not perused with intense interest the history of a series of refreshing seasons described in the Acts of the Apostles? As we trace the history of the church for some hundreds of years, ending with times but little earlier than our own, we find that many periods of great awakening have been enjoyed. How numerous were the turnings to the Lord in the days of Luther and his associates. The years of Owen, Bunyan and Baxter, were also signalized in the same way. Some parts of the British Isles have been wonderfully distinguished by the manifestations of God's mercy in the outpouring of his Spirit. New England was early made hallowed ground by influences from above. As one settlement after another was formed, the inquiry of the people soon began to be, not how shall we go back to the country whence we came, but in what way shall we get to heaven? It was then a great question with individuals, Have I true grace wrought in my heart? Is Jesus formed in me, the hope of glory? A little before the middle of the last century, an era of great interest commenced in the history of revivals. Perhaps not less distinguished was the closing part of the same century. Some twenty years since, the United States were the scene of an extraordinary religious movement. It was thought that fifty thousands became hopefully heirs of heaven, in the course of six months. But our reflections upon that period are sad rather than otherwise, because, in connection with the work of God, man allowed him-

self to introduce measures professedly to promote godliness, which have greatly marred the peace of the church ever since.

2. None but God can grant a revival. Zion's thirsty hills must remain as they are, if Jehovah do not gather over them the clouds of his mercy and pour upon them the rain of his grace. As already intimated, every ray of spiritual illumination is from Him, and darts forth only at his bidding. He, who commanded the light to shine upon the darkness of chaos, must cause the beams of righteousness to descend upon souls benighted, or they will never enjoy the presence of the Holy Ghost. To revive religion is not a human work. As surely as it requires the power of Omnipotence to bring back again to life those in whom the vital spark has become extinct, so, to make men new creatures in Christ Jesus, and to quicken the graces that languish, can be done only by the Almighty. It is a work as really beyond the ability of man as is the creation of a world. To trust in any thing short of Omnipotence for a new heart, is the climax of presumption. In this respect, "the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted." The church cannot be afflicted with a greater heresy, than would be the rejection of the doctrine, that to revive pure and undefiled religion, is wholly the work of God. A deep, abiding sense of dependence upon sovereign grace, for saving help in the conversion of the soul to holiness, is a necessary prerequisite to a revival. The opposite sentiment may be attended by fanatical exhibitions, and the multiplying of spurious converts. It is a historical fact, worthy of remembrance, that those who have instrumentally accomplished the greatest good in the kingdom of Christ, were persons pervaded by a sense of their entire dependence on divine sovereignty. I desire to proclaim with all the energy of which I am capable, that excitements on the subject of religion, occasioned by the arts of men, are not approved by God, but are the fruits

of unsanctified zeal, and, more than probable, of a hypocritical ambition. In the name of the Triune God, I will protest against the employing of human devices ; yea, of any means, which do not flow naturally out of the command to preach the gospel to every creature. My prayers shall ascend to the King of Zion, that he will hereafter keep back his servants from those presumptuous measures, which have brought into the church troubles which we feel and deplore, but know not how to remove. God of our fathers, bring us to the footstool of thy sovereignty, and there enable us, individually, with profound submission and faith to affirm, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." Jehovah of hosts, grant us perpetual deliverance from that man-worship, which has disgraced thy people and dishonored thee.

3. In reviving his work, God makes use of means. He is not dependent upon them, but they are an important part in his economy. The methods by which sinners are brought to him, are truly diversified, because he thus decides. Man's heart is always naked and open unto the Lord. The Spirit descending from above may fall upon it directly, and the rebel at once be prostrate in the dust, crying for mercy. Such in substance was the fact with the Tarsian persecutor, and the Philippian jailor. Conviction for sin is not a necessary result of certain preceding efforts to instruct the mind. Some hear the truth for half a century, and yet remain insensible of their guilt. Without limiting in any way the sovereignty of the Spirit in his work of convicting and renewing men, it is still important for us to bear in mind, that the moral government of God employs human agency and instrumentality. Destitute in themselves of saving efficacy, means are essential, because ordained by the Lord of salvation. Every genuine revival illustrates the necessity of means, and at the same time the sovereignty of divine grace. The word of truth must be



spoken, heard, and obeyed. Showers which refresh the earth may descend alike upon the cultivated field and the unfertile desert, upon the region in which no man dwells as freely as upon the populous town. It is not so with the outpourings of grace, for these fall only upon cultivated portions of the earth. Clouds of mercy hover over the sanctuary. "We do not trust, but tempt God, if, when we pray to him for help, we do not second our prayers by our endeavors." A people that will not hallow the Sabbath, cannot reasonably expect displays of saving grace. Communities in which divine institutions are neglected, ought to fear, lest they be given up to all manner of wickedness. Visits of the Holy Spirit are made where the instructions of the Bible are printed and preached, read and remembered; the truths of this holy book are usually, if not always, the harbinger of the renewing Agent. It is highly presumptuous and offensive to God to expect a revival without a diligent use of his appointed means. To affirm that we desire a season of refreshing when we are slothful in the discharge of duty, is to say and to deny what is said at the same time. The Most High connects with revivals, fidelity in the closet, strict attention to the duties of family religion, unweariedness in social prayer, and uniformity in appearing before him in his courts. He requires a putting away of all obstacles; a banishment of undue attachments to the things of time. It is recorded as a fact, in respect to a region in which revivals were prevailing, that "where the demon of political strife gained ascendancy among a people, the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit either did not come, or did not abide." By the same authority it is likewise affirmed, that "no form of controversy, during that period of revivals, was so fraught with deadly mischief to the cause of religion as the clashing of rival Christian sects." Divided and distracted churches, of course, do not enjoy divine refreshings. Covetousness repels the



Spirit; certain kinds of preaching are not accompanied by special influences from on high. We never hear that those discourses in which Christ's supreme divinity is opposed, or those in which the doctrine of future endless punishment is discarded, are attended with drops of saving mercy. The state of things demanded, in order that the Holy Ghost may display his mighty power in quickening saints, and in renovating sinners, is exhibited clearly in the Scriptures. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Eph. 4 : 31, 32. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

Let the friends of the Redeemer, who mourn because of the absence of reviving influences, inquire wherein they have grieved the Spirit; and humble themselves for all their departures from duty. The Holy Ghost must be entreated to return, and visit the vineyard which God's right hand hath planted. Earnest persevering supplications for a revival cannot be in vain; the blessing will descend. "They that sow in tears, shall reap in joy." Send up the importunate prayer recorded by inspiration, ye whose hearts bleed for the church: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." How immeasurable is thy mercy, God of Zion! Pity thou hast in a boundless store for thy sorrowing saints, and grace infinite with which to bring trophies into thy kingdom.

## CHRIST'S LAST COMMAND.

The Son of God, having so far completed the work for which he was manifested in the flesh, that heaven, not earth, must thenceforward be the scene of his personal presence, made preparation to leave time. With his apostles, he went out to Bethany ; where, while in the act of blessing them, " he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." Subsequent to his resurrection and near the event of his ascension, he gave them the following definite commission : " Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." This has been designated the Redeemer's last command. If it were not so in the order of events, its magnitude justly entitles it to preëminence. We have not here words of mere permission or persuasion ; they possess the highest authority. According to one evangelist, they were prefaced by the declaration, " All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." This charge to preach the gospel to mankind every where, came from the King of Zion, whose greatness could in no way be increased. He had an absolute right to direct thus, and the subjects of his mandate were shut up to obedience, or to a forfeiture of their Lord's approbation. What reception did they give it ? A trust more weighty was never committed to man. Difficulties, yea, apparent impossibilities, were obstructing the way of carrying out the command, and naught but faith in the promise, " Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," could adequately sustain them in the attempt. They received the commission, and entered, in due time, upon its accomplishment. If the most comprehensive import of the order were not fully executed, it was because of hindrances which human agency could not remove, and the divine did not. No good reason exists for limiting, in the least, the expression, " all the world." Let it be taken in its most unrestricted signi-

fication. Special religious privileges had been confined to the nation of Israel ; such was no longer to be the case ; Jews and Gentiles were to become one in privilege under the new dispensation. When the apostles and elders were, at first, sent forth on short preaching excursions, they were prohibited by their Master from going beyond the boundary of the *elect* nation. To just what extent the inhabitants of the earth actually heard the gospel, from the first promulgers, we have not definite information ; for it does not certainly follow, that every section of the inhabited globe was reached by the apostles. No people was to be passed by ; all were to be visited and instructed in the gospel, if the end could be accomplished. Christ knew whether any people then dwelt on this continent, or on the islands of the most distant oceans. He too was acquainted with every mode of conveyance by land or by sea. Perhaps some parts of the world now populous, were at that time wholly unsettled. But if the human family were then as widely dispersed as in the present century, and the apostles failed to visit every country, it was because of natural impossibilities. They sought to execute fully the Lord's injunction, undaunted by dangers. Home, friends, and country, were abandoned by them, without regard to inconveniences. Idolatry was cursing the world, when in the name of Zion's Ruler these unassuming preachers went abroad, denouncing heathenism, and publishing salvation through the once crucified but arisen and ascended Jesus. Never before did men attempt so much ; yet there was no fanaticism in their enterprise. Filled with the Holy Spirit, and guarded by the invisible presence of the Almighty Mediator, with no weapons except divine truth, and no armor but faith in God, they attacked the castles of sin and demanded surrender. With amazing boldness they entered the temples of superstition, confuted the hierarchies of old establishments, and demolished the strange systems of debasing devil-worship. The instruments of their warfare were not

carnal, "but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds." Within thirty years after the Redeemer's return to heaven, the gospel had triumphed extensively; having spread over Judea, Galilee, Samaria and Asia Minor, "through Greece and the Islands of the Ægean Sea." It had gone successfully along "the sea-coast of Africa, and had passed on to the capital of Italy." The New Testament record closes without fully informing us how near the apostles came to a literal accomplishment of their commission; yet the last glimpses of their operations shown us by its pages, leave them zealously prosecuting their labors. "All ecclesiastical and profane history concurs in describing the rapid progress of the new doctrine." Persons of every rank and situation were numbered among the followers of Immanuel; heathen temples were deserted, and pagan altars left without sacrifices. We may judge something of what the apostles accomplished, by the state of things in the centuries immediately subsequent to their age; and we are informed that Christianity filled "the cities, islands, towns, boroughs, the camp, the senate, and the forum." As the Scriptures do not definitely inform us respecting the remotest nations, we are unable to decide for certainty whether the apostles themselves, or those whom they commissioned, went to the extreme east of Asia, to the parts of Europe most remote from Palestine, and to the farthest regions of Africa. It would doubtless excite derision to suggest, that an inspired apostle ever set his foot upon this continent, and such a supposition is not probable, yet can it be shown that an event of the kind was impossible? Modern missions have enlarged somewhat our idea of the actual extent of territory travelled by the apostles. In some countries new evidence has been brought to light, showing that those whom Christ addressed, when he said "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," strove most diligently and with

preëminent success to plant the standard of the cross among every section of our race.

“He spake, and light shone round his head ;  
On a bright cloud to heaven he rode ;  
They to the farthest nations spread  
The grace of their ascended God.”

Here the question arises, whether the Saviour's last command was binding on any excepting those, to whom it was originally given. What inference is to be drawn from the nature of the gospel ? The angel declared to the shepherds of Bethlehem, that it is “good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.” It was foretold of the Messiah, that in him the nations of the earth should be blessed ; yet this becomes a fact only so far as they possess the gospel. Evidently the system of revealed religion contained in the Scriptures, is demanded by the necessities of human beings, in every variety of their condition. In that system is an antidote for the evils of earth, and aside from it there is none. Does the family of man require relief ? Surely, for it is fearfully burdened. Shall not the needy be visited by that which alone can save them from their present degradation, and perpetual ruin in the future state ? Has reason any other decision ? Is it not her dictate, that the demands of humanity, provided for in the gospel and not elsewhere, should be met ?

Did the apostles suppose that the order of their Master was applicable only to themselves ? No ; for they ordained and sent out many, converted through their efforts. To the utmost of their ability they provided preachers, who should help them, and take their place, so far as possible, after their death. In some respects the apostles could have none to succeed them. Their office was peculiar in many points. In their character as ministers of Christ, all divinely appointed to preach are their successors ; the mantles of the former have descended from age to age upon the latter, or, to utter language which is



equally true and less figurative, whoever in any period or part of the world, has rightfully heralded salvation, has been as truly called to the office as were the eleven disciples who saw the ascension of Jesus. But as men infallibly inspired to write the history of the Redeemer's life, sufferings and death ; as individuals appointed to discuss doctrines, and establish rules for the regulation of the saints in all time subsequent to their own, the apostles were a distinct order, which ceased entirely when those, who first enjoyed its prerogatives, were called into eternity. The apostolic office was limited to a short period ; that of preachers and pastors extends to the end of time.

Look now at the course pursued by the successors of the apostles. Were they not zealous in propagating the gospel ? Ecclesiastical history leaves no room for doubt. Take another view of this subject. Can any rational, accountable creature, who has himself been made an heir of heaven, by this divine economy, not be desirous, that all should be savingly benefited by it ? Having once experienced the efficacy of God's grace, can he fail to seek the holy boon for others ? Does not the Spirit create in the heart, feelings of universal good will ? Is there aught of selfishness encouraged or permitted by the Son of God ? Does not *he* falsify his profession, who claims fellowship with Christ, yet manifests no compassion for man ?

We cannot, if disposed, resist the conclusion that those possessing the truth as it is in Jesus, are obligated to furnish it to the destitute. Thus reason directs and conscience prompts ; thus, too, does the authority of the Head of all things command. His people are essentially one, whether they be prophets or pastors, apostles, or evangelists, public ambassadors or private believers. To those of this age, who dwell amid the light and peace procured by the gospel, the ascended Saviour now speaks, as he did to the eleven. His teaching must be proclaimed every where. Affecting is the fact, but real, that now

missionaries are needed in the very country where the Lord of glory prayed and preached ; nor is it less a duty for believers of this age to announce to the benighted there, life eternal through him, who died on Calvary, than it was for the first preachers to depart thence to the ends of the earth. The rule must be that the supplied furnish the destitute, however ill-deserving. God may, in righteous retribution, leave a people, who have rejected his mercy as presented in the Bible ; yet his children must give up none to their folly, so long as the direction to teach all, is not revoked in respect to any. Man's perseverance in efforts to save his fellow-beings, should be checked or retarded only by the plainest indications of Providence.

On those now in possession of that infinite good, the system of religion given by Jehovah, devolves the duty of making it known to every nation and family at present destitute of its blessings. Yea, and theirs likewise is the privilege. Who should aspire to a more honorable service ? Champions of the cross are engaged in an enterprise precious in the sight of Omniscience. They go forth under the banner of the Lord of hosts ; their labors cannot be lost, for the Highest insures success. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them ; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." It should be regarded as eminently a happy characteristic of an age, that in it much is done for the evangelization of the world. To live amid numerous well directed schemes for the good of man, should be deemed a favor ; and not to be a co-worker with the benevolent, may justly incur their reproach. He deserves not the name of philanthropist, much less of Christian, who does not aid cheerfully and liberally in spreading the gospel.

## CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.

*Some of its Characteristics.*

The term benevolence, primarily signifies well wishing, good feeling ; but in a *technical* sense now much used, it implies beneficence. Benevolent persons not only *desire* the happiness of their fellow-creatures ; they likewise seek it, by the conferment of favors, as ability permits. Real benevolence has its seat in the heart, and thence goes forth as a stream from its fountain, to cheer and bless. Individuals characterized by this virtue, feel for all, and render assistance as they have the means. The poor may be as truly benevolent as the wealthy, though the latter can more extensively assist the needy. Such as are destitute of money, may manifest mercy. There should be the pitying eye in those by whom the replenishing purse is not possessed. Sympathy at times is more needed than are gifts of gold. God requires us to be benevolent, and furnishes, in his providential arrangements, occasions for a display of this excellence. Definite sums are not prescribed by the great Lawgiver. Christ's disciples are left to assess themselves. Of some it may be said, that if they give any thing, they part with their all. The widow's "two mites," constituted her "living." Mere giving to objects of charity, does not prove one genuinely liberal. "Let no man do alms of that which is not his own," for in so doing he would "make himself a thief, and the poor to be receivers" of his unjust bestowment. The law of love does not require that every call should be answered ; since thousands beg for a livelihood when they might earn it by honest industry. "A well-digested charity will be considerate in the selection of its subjects." One of the wise maxims relative to this point, is, "Give no alms to vicious persons, if such alms will support their vices."

It has been intimated that the truly benevolent bestow, according to their means, and are not regulated by the enactments of parsimony. Their offerings are free-will, not extorted. They regard themselves as stewards, amid the fields, and flocks and merchandise of Him, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof. Having deposited their gifts, they do not feel as if they had laid the heavens under obligation to them, but have simply performed an obvious, indispensable duty. They believe that to be selfish in such a world as this, "is one of the greatest triumphs of sin;" and that "covetousness cannot move in it, without being rebuked at every step." The highest degree of benevolent action is accompanied with fervent supplications, that the recipient may share in the condescending kindness and forgiving love of God. "Charity is one of the wings of prayer, by which it flies to the throne of grace."

Another characteristic of the truly benevolent person, is a readiness to practise self-denial for the good of humanity. This trait is supposed to be not congenial to the minds of all who would be deemed generous. What, must I incommode myself to aid another? Yes, verily, there are occasions in which it must be done, or the stamp of selfishness supreme, be borne by thee. Thou art not indeed to love another better than thyself; this is not implied in the parting with luxuries or even some conveniences, to save a fellow-creature from death or degradation. By what laws of time or eternity, mayst thou continue to bask in uninterrupted sunshine, while a neighbor gropes in utter darkness, and it is in thy power to grant him some light, by a little lessening of thine own? It is a mistake to infer that all the birds were made to sing for our ears alone; that the skies are clear or veiled simply for our sakes. Of one blood were all the nations of the earth; and the more favored classes are constituted, by the King of all, almoners of his bounties to the less favored. See the Lord of glory descending from his lofty throne, self-disrobed for the sake of a



perishing race. Rich he was, and poor he became, that multitudes through his poverty might be enriched. Mark, too, the illustrious example of those who, at the call of this wonderful pattern, forsook all for the kind enterprise in which he was engaged. It is indeed a law of the gospel kingdom, that in order to be a follower of Jesus, self must be denied, and a cross daily borne: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." When the Son of God had returned from his humiliation to the honors of the upper world, his servants went forth, subjecting themselves to perils severe, numerous and constant. They showed their right to be regarded the representatives of him, who had not where to lay his head, by actually exhibiting his penury in their own persons. Primitive Christians also, as a variety of testimony makes certain, in which are included numerous martyrdoms, proved that they understood practically the theory of self-denial. Said one of them, "we are commanded to pray for our daily bread; not for riches and delicacies; not for splendid garments and golden ornaments; not for silken carpets and great possessions, but for bread." An eminent modern writer has observed, that "in the early age of the Christian church, the heavenly art of embalming property and making it immortal, was not only known, but practised." A title now to a place in the gospel kingdom, is the same as in former ages.

Genuine benevolence, not merely entertains kindly those seeking benefactions; it searches out the abodes of sorrow, the regions of darkness, the families that are perishing, and the nations that know not God. On wings of love, in imitation of him who died for sinners, do the benevolent fly to all the habitations of men, to which access is opened, and scatter blessings upon each. Charity is never blind, never deaf, never palsied.

Perhaps it is worthy of an inquiry, whether one may not



go beyond proper limits, in diffusing abroad the means at his command. Obviously the danger lies not generally in that direction. Should, however, an extreme now and then occur, the error, if it be so termed, is sustained by Bible precedence. The following from a writer, already quoted, is here in point. "When Christ is the object to be honored, the affection of the pardoned penitent cannot stop to calculate the value of its alabaster box of precious ointment; that is an act to which only a Judas can stoop; its chief and sole regret is, that the unction has not a richer perfume, and a higher value." What may be withheld from him, who gave himself to die for sinners? His sacrifice was the greatest possible; shall man's be nearly nothing?

*The Reward of this Benevolence.*

Whoever bestows in charity from right motives, and as he has the ability, is rewarded in his own soul. The Creator has so constituted us, that the proper exercise of benevolent feelings shall be mentally and immediately compensated. Good done to others is accompanied with pleasurable emotions. Recall the day which was passed in efforts to help the destitute, or to cheer the desponding; was not the sleep of its night pleasant to thee? Does not conscience always approve of kindness? And is not its sanction a source of pleasure? Who can greatly discompose the spirit soothed by its smiles?

Temporal prosperity is attendant upon a well conducted generosity. "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." Careful observation will confirm the above statement. Indeed, a slight acquaintance with society is sufficient to evince the fact, that those communities which deal bountifully, are furnished richly with earthly good. "The most marked interpo-

sitions and signal blessings, even earthly prosperity, have attended the practice of Christian liberality in every age." Real charity is "like the effusion of oil by the Sidonian woman; as long as she pours into empty vessels, it can never cease running; or, like the widow's barrel, it consumes not as long as she feeds the prophet." Compare the pecuniary condition of places where an enlightened generosity prevails with those known as parsimonious, and the result will always be in favor of the former. "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat and have left plenty, for the Lord hath blessed his people." 2 Chron. 31: 10. God frowns upon an unfeeling, selfish man or community. "Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard." Prov. 21: 13. Should it be objected, that some distinguished for bountifulness in the distribution of the world's treasures in their hands, have themselves come to want, the reply may be appropriately made, that all who give are not actuated by a right spirit; there is an opportunity for the workings of an unhallowed ambition; one may bestow alms to be seen of men. "He that gives alms must do it with a single eye and heart." We know it is not impossible, that while outwardly there is the appearance of genuine philanthropy, the Searcher of hearts may see in various respects marked dishonesty. Furthermore, the general law, relative to the attendance of temporal prosperity on generosity, may have real exceptions, just as do nearly all laws. Jehovah is uniformly just and merciful, but his wisdom sometimes withholds what we should regard as temporal favors, when they might be naturally expected.

Far richer than all earthly good, granted by God to the generous giver, are the conferments of his spiritual favors; these flow in copious streams upon the benevolent. Those watering, are themselves watered. Giving for the glory of the Lord is sowing to the Spirit, and that holy Agent guarantees a gra-

cious ingathering, for "he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." Nothing is a surer precursor of spiritual desolation to a church than a neglect of benevolent enterprises. A community nominally Christian, that will not aid in converting the heathen, is taking the direct course to become a moral waste. No religious society can afford to dismiss contribution boxes. These little treasures must be preserved for the sake of their reflex influence. While we find passages of Scripture asserting, some a temporal, and others a spiritual reward to the munificent, there is in another class a delightful union of the two. "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the window of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground, neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed, for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts." Those exercising benevolence as they are required, may entertain cheerful anticipations of eternity, for the Judge encourages them to do it. "When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind; and thou shalt be blessed, for they cannot recompense thee; for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Property devoted to the interests of mankind is treasure well invested for the endless future. Not even a cup of cold water presented to one with pure motives shall be unrewarded. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," embraces a principle which will be recognized in the decisions of the last day. But let it be added, that if, in view of the certain and rich remuneration promised to the benevolent, any should propose to secure temporal and spiritual favors by a selfish distribution of

gifts ; it would be well for them to consider, that their generosity is divested of a happy reflex influence, by the unhallowedness of its main motive. In order to secure good by giving, God's honor must be regarded in the bestowment.

*Ways for the Exercise of it.*

With some of the characteristics of true benevolence, and the certainty that its exercise will be rewarded, before us, let a glance be given to a few of the many calls for generous contributions. Here is a child of sorrow, whose tears must be dried by a timely relief of bodily necessities ; there is one who, like the man descending from Jerusalem to Jericho, has fallen among thieves, that have robbed him and left him scarcely alive. On one hand, the rights of the widow and the fatherless are invaded, and must be defended by the zeal of disinterested philanthropy ; on the other, are those, who, bereft of both father and mother, are wholly dependent upon charity. Now we see the famishing, and now those in rags. In this place, the degraded must be elevated ; in that, the unfortunate should be encouraged and the desponding cheered. A little way from us is the prison with its wicked inmates, who need untiring efforts to reclaim them from vice ; nor would it require a long journey to find the hospital filled with sufferers ; perhaps they are insane, perhaps they are the dumb and deaf, or the blind, or the variously diseased and the mutilated. What vast extent of territory on this continent which requires prompt and energetic effort to supply its rude inhabitants with the gospel ; and how loud is the cry from perishing millions scattered over the other sections of the earth, for the knowledge of the living God. "Come and help us, or we die." They have a right thus to call, and those furnished with the means of teaching them the truth, will be guilty if they do not send the light of the Lord. All the ways in which benevo-



lence may go forth, relieving the distressed, soothing the sorrowing, and saving with an everlasting salvation the heirs of hell, in them it should be seen scattering goodness. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand." To every individual desirous of benefiting, in some way, the human family, the Head of the church is saying, "Behold I have set before thee an open door." Whoever will, may share in the high honor of a co-worker with the Most High in subduing the world by grace.

*This Benevolence too little exercised.*

It must be confessed, that the exercise of genuine benevolence is far less extensive than it ought to be. Selfishness is even now the controlling principle of much the larger proportion of mankind, in lands nominally Christian, and there is reason to apprehend that many in the church are ruled by it. "The great current of Christian property is as yet undirected from its worldly channel." What shall awake slumbering believers? By whom can they be incited to exert themselves in well ordered methods for the renovation of the race? O, for a return of "the heavenly art of embalming property and of making it immortal," as it was employed in the primitive simplicity of the new dispensation! Come, thou excellent age of the world, when gold shall be consecrated by each Christian possessor of it to the glory of God! Followers of Jesus, yea, all who would befriend the human race, devote your gain to the promotion of general philanthropy, seek in every aim to exalt society. Who may not do something? Who can be willing to do nothing for the millions of his fellow-men? This is the era in the earth's history, when, more than ever, kingdoms and dominions are accessible to the bearers of blessings. Now should children be nurtured in the sentiment, that



salvation by Christ is to be published to every nation, infant ears ought to be familiar with these notes :

“Salvation, O salvation !  
The joyful sound proclaim,  
Till earth's remotest nation  
Has learned Messiah's name.”

The fingers of little ones should be taught to let small pieces of money drop into the contribution box. Let it be instilled into the youngest minds that the great, the exalted end of honorable existence is the good of man and the glory of God. Happy will they be who are thus taught and so practise. Wealth, how desirable art thou, when laid on the altar of the world's Redeemer ! Yet, two mites are a million, if it be given in faith according to ability, and accompanied with fervent prayer. No contribution is small if it be thus bestowed. The heart of the giver can render great or small the gift.

#### SILVER AND GOLD ARE THE LORD'S.

This proposition is based on an assertion of the Holy One, and its terms vary but little from those employed by himself : “The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.” My object, in this article, is to illustrate and apply the position assumed in its caption.

1. Silver and gold are the Lord's, as they exist in the ore. He made and deposited in the earth every particle of gold dust, and every atom of silver which have been discovered or now remain concealed. In forming the material globe, the different kinds of substances that should constitute it, were called into existence as he judged proper. What there should be, and how much of each, was decided by his sovereign pleasure. Just so much of silver and of gold as the world now contains, was created when God made the earth. No particle

of matter has existed from eternity ; nor does matter transmute itself, changing its original nature. It is not possible for lead, or copper, or iron, to convert itself into gold or silver, or into any other precious metal.

2. Silver and gold are the Lord's in the coin. He does not surrender his right to them when they are extracted from the earth, nor when they are smelted, nor when they pass through the mint. The miners, the smelters, and the minters are his, their strength is from him ; the arts and the instruments by which they work are his, as well as the substances on which these are employed. By what sort of logic, then, shall it be made to appear that silver and gold, which are the Lord's in the ore, are not his when they come from the mint, stamped by the authority of this or some other nation ? At what step of the process of converting gold and silver dust into money, does God relinquish his absolute claim to them ? He does it no where, but regards them as his at every stage of the process by which they are transformed from glittering dust to solid coin.

3. Silver and God are the Lord's, in their circulation. They are so, unless he withdraw his claim, when they begin to be used as a medium of exchange. Because man employs them for purposes of trade, is not even presumptive evidence that they have ceased to be the Lord's. To assume that they are not his when thus appropriated, only proves the ignorance or arrogance of those who make the assumption. He permits air, light, and water, yea, every thing on earth, to be used by his creatures ; but never does he intimate that he ceases to regard all things as his own. The image and superscription of Cæsar upon a piece of money, may show that it belongs to that person rather than to another ; and in a sense, the Creator may so commit it to Cæsar's care that it should be regarded as his in contradistinction to certain things, which, on account of being set apart specially to religion, are said to belong to

God ; as we read, "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's ; but the earth hath he given to the children of men." But that he makes no absolute surrender of aught beneath the sun, to mortals, he most explicitly affirms.

4. Silver and gold are the Lord's, in every variety of service to which they have been or can be devoted. When the Most High expostulated with his people for neglecting to rear the temple after their return from captivity, and admonished them of the fact that his are the silver and the gold, these metals were, doubtless, as variously employed as they now are. Many were the ornaments and articles wrought from these valuable substances. Heathen divinities have been formed from them. The calf set up for Israel to worship, when Moses delayed to come down from the mount whereon he communed with Jehovah, was of gold. We read of one Demetrius, who made silver shrines for the great goddess Diana, and he found it a very profitable trade.

Enough has been advanced illustrative of the position that silver and gold are the Lord's. From the truth asserted and elucidated, certain other positions flow.

1. God has a right to make what use he pleases of his silver and gold. May he not do what he will with his own ? Shall he be at all restricted in the distribution of his treasures ? If he saw fit to conceal them, at first, in the heart of the earth, who may affirm that he did wrong ? Perhaps there are now vastly greater quantities unknown than have ever been brought to light. Millions of dollars' worth of silver and of gold are possibly lying beneath the soil on which we daily tread. The foundation of the hills that skirt our horizon may be of solid gold. Who shall affirm that half the bed of the ocean is not paved with silver ; and that the sands of numerous, yet undiscovered rivers, are not gold ? It is a matter of no special concern to us, in our reasoning about them, how much or how little there is of gold and silver. The quantity was limited

by unerring wisdom. So far as creative power was exercised, it had been as easy for God to make gold, as matter in forms more gross. He saw it best to fix the amount where it now stands, and there is a sufficiency. It were as wise to wish there were less as to desire an increase.

2. If God have a right to use silver and gold as he pleases, he may bestow a much greater amount upon one person than he does upon another, provided it seems best to him thus to do. There surely is great diversity in the pecuniary circumstances of men. But the providence of the Lord is as marked and various in regard to the possession of wealth, as in other respects. True, "the hand of the diligent maketh rich," but only so when prosperity is granted from above. An abundance may be the result of untiring industry, and at the same time of special providential favors. The Scriptures instruct us to recognize God in all events, and to acknowledge him as the author of every good. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" Here let it be observed, that when the Most High places in the hands of an individual much property, he renders the responsibility of that person correspondingly great. The receiver of ten talents must account for their use; while he who has been endowed with only one, will be required to answer but for the improvement of that small sum. Evidently, in general, secular enterprises could not be as successfully conducted as they are, were pecuniary means more equally distributed among men. Who can fail to be grateful to the Supreme Being for his allotments in respect to wealth? Large possessions and important enterprises are wisely united. What good would money do in the hands of the irresolute?

3. Those to whom the Almighty gives silver and gold, should use them only in accordance with his will. Now every act, whether sacred or secular, which man *ought* to perform, is *required* of him by his Maker; for we have no duties except



such as He appoints. Human beings are stationed in this world for the discharge of certain offices, the assignments of their God. They are stewards, and faithfulness is demanded of all sustaining such a relation. Unquestionably it is the divine will that the state of society should be civilized, not savage; refined, not barbarous. So much of his silver and of his gold as are requisite for the highest good of humanity, he allots to its promotion. It is essential for the well-being of every healthful man, that some useful occupation should require his daily attention. Permit him to be indolent, and the streams of his depravity will multiply and swell. Ship-building, navigation, commerce, exploring voyages, the filling of valleys and the bringing down of hills, the bridging of rivers and the cutting through of mountains, are not necessarily offensive to God; indeed he appoints them, if they promote the general weal of the world.

4. When the Lord calls for any sum of silver or gold, be it more or less, those with whom he has made deposits, should yield the amount without complaint or delay. Sometimes he has a number of sanctuaries to erect, and at others various institutions of learning to endow. There is also a great variety of benevolent societies which he has formed; and for their successful prosecution frequent large drafts of money are required. Continually he is establishing new missionary stations, or planning for the greater efficiency of those already in existence. The Lord is constantly doing something to benefit mankind, and many of his designs demand liberal appropriations of silver and gold. It is certain, however, that in no instance does he call for more generous donations from those to whom he has intrusted money, than himself placed in their care, and commonly it is only a part that is needed.

5. It must be conceded that the Most High has been for years calling upon the guardians of his gold and silver, to deliver into the hands of his authorized agents portions of what



he has deposited with them. The precise amount required of each individual is not ordinarily specified, but every one is directed to surrender a share, and he should consult most carefully the dictates of conscience, and the laws of the statute book, before he decides the point of quantity. If only two mites can be spared, no more is required. Be it remembered that God never will permit the rich to be so liberal, as to render the gifts of the poor unnecessary. This class shall always enjoy the luxury of doing good with their little. It is an established rule with the Governor of all things to employ the bestowments of the circumscribed. Never will he cause the millions of his silver and gold, now held by the unholy, to flow into the channels of Christian philanthropy, while by so doing he might seem to cut off the privilege of giving, at present enjoyed by those who contribute of their penury. The time is coming, when every bank on earth shall be laid open to the church ; but first there must be numerous overturnings, which will depend very much for their happy issue on the charities of the poor. Jehovah is now demanding cents, dimes, dollars, eagles, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands ; but ere long he will lay his omnipotent grasp upon millions, and woe to any who may attempt to resist his will. His are the silver and the gold, and to do what he pleases with his own, is a prerogative never yielded or opposed with impunity.

#### MAN CONSIDERED MORALLY ; OR DEPRAVITY.

The discussion of the topic contained in this caption cannot be more suitably opened than by quoting that passage of inimitable beauty, precision and comprehensiveness : " God hath made man upright ; but they have sought out many inventions." We are reminded at once of the sublime origin of him who was created " in the image of God." If we are not able

to state definitely every particular embraced in that "likeness" of his Creator which he originally possessed, yet we are sure it included the perfect holiness of his nature. The divine prohibition given to our first parents, in the following words, was a test of their obedience. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2: 17. Here was a *positive* command, but the obligation to obêy it was *moral*. The subjects of it had no right to inquire, why are we excluded from the fruit of that tree? A divine interdict should have been sufficient to satisfy them that they were wisely denied it. God may try his accountable creatures in just the manner he deems best. They have only to conform themselves to his bidding, or to suffer the consequences of disobedience. Whether Adam and Eve were more likely to sin in the way in which they did, than in some other; or whether they were less likely to fall as they did, than they would have been by a different temptation, is a point about which speculative minds can, if they please, raise questions and frame answers to suit themselves. We have no certain information in respect to the length of time innocence reigned in Eden. The presumption is, that the bright morning of human existence was *early* veiled in awful clouds; that the days of primitive bliss were not very numerous.

Death was the penalty affixed to the law of paradise. What import are we to attach to that rather ambiguous term? In this age its interpretation is not uniform. The Scriptures also employ the word with more than one or two significations. Just how much did the Almighty mean, when He said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die?" We suppose *He* knew precisely the intent and the extent of His own asseveration, and that all which he designed to predict, was actually fulfilled within twenty-four hours of Adam's transgression. Nearly six thousand years have been elucidating this

first announcement in a long series of prophecies. On this point, experience, observation, and the Bible speak the same sentiment ; and it is in such language as the following : When man sinned, he immediately became mortal, as to his body ; dead in sin, as to his soul ; and an heir of the hell which had been previously “ prepared for the devil and his angels.” In all these respects he *died* on the day of his eating the forbidden fruit. Whether Adam fully understood the terms of the threatened penalty or not, the word of the Lord has left us uninformed. He was neither an infant nor an ignorant child ; but an adult, bearing the image of his Maker. Probably not one of his posterity has possessed a mind so acute, strong, and comprehensive as his. We may suppose, if we please, that Jehovah laid before him the endless evils which would be consequent upon transgression. Still his obligation to obey did not depend upon the evils which would result if he did not obey. The rules of the infinite Lawgiver should always be our guide ; even could we suppose that no terrible penalty might fall upon those coming short or going beyond the line marked out by him.

The progenitors of our race violated the law of God, and the sin by which they “ fell from the state wherein they were created, was their eating of the forbidden fruit.” Such are the plain teachings of Scripture. Finite beings are mutable. Probation implies the possibility that those enjoying it may forfeit the favor of Him who appoints them their lot. In the third chapter of Genesis, we find a somewhat minute history of the *Fall* of man. There is an unvarnished narration of the main steps by which sin and ruin have filled the earth. Jehovah himself is the author of this account, and we should regard any man, however high his pretensions to learning, as a falsifier of the Scriptures, if he explain away the obvious purport of these statements. There is in these verses no demand for allegorizing ; no need of a resort to symbols. It is not a

chapter of metaphors, but of facts, clearly announced and consecutively exhibited. Because we do not hear a serpent speak, is no argument against the biblical representation that the devil used such an agent in decoying the mother of us all. Of the immense changes occasioned in the natural world, by the introduction of moral evil, our ideas are unavoidably indefinite. Significant hints there are on different pages of the Bible, from which we may gather the sentiment, that sin affected every thing on earth. Since the day of the first transgression, the world has been disordered. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." The very ground was cursed for man's sake. "In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." Our chief concern, however, when tracing the effects of the transgression of Adam, should be to ascertain whether his posterity have been badly influenced by it, for they, like him, are susceptible of suffering. If his sin involved them in ruin, it is a fact important for them to understand.

What then is the natural moral state of mankind? This solemn and important inquiry may be answered in a very few words, yet it ought not to be dismissed without serious consideration. In reflecting on the subject, I have thought that the most direct way for me to reach a correct and impressive conclusion, would be to take up and analyze an observation, touching the matter in hand, made by an inspired apostle, concerning himself, in these words: "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Romans 7: 18. In examining this statement of one who was not only divinely taught to speak the truth, but so to utter it, that after generations might appeal to his declarations as unquestionable authority relative to every point discussed by him, I shall raise two questions, for which I will endeavor to provide answers.

*First.* What does the apostle mean when making the above



cited declaration concerning himself? Are we to regard him as using the term *flesh* in its most literal signification, and as giving utterance to a conclusion derived from a careful scrutiny of the properties of his physical frame? Does he mean simply to affirm that his body is entirely diseased? Was the apostle a physiologist, and do we have, in his words before us, the result of an investigation of his own corporeal system? Surely nothing of this nature is intended. Paul was of another profession, and his language relates to a moral, not to a physical subject. The word *flesh* is not infrequently used in a moral sense. Christ says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." John 3 : 6. Surely he does not assert a mere truism respecting the physical homogeneousness of parents and their offspring. His meaning is, that the children of the unholy are themselves sinful ; just as what is produced by the Holy Ghost is pure, like himself. The last part of the passage reads, "And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Does not the connection clearly exhibit the import of the term *flesh* to be man's moral nature as unchanged by grace? In the eighth chapter of Romans an antithetical use of the words *flesh* and *spirit* occurs a number of times. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit."—"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit." We meet with substantially the same ideas in phraseology a little different in verses immediately following those last quoted. "For to be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Being carnally minded is the same as walking after the flesh. It is furthermore said, that "the carnal mind is enmity against God ; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh can-



not please God." It must be already manifest to every candid inquirer, that the apostle employs the term *flesh* to designate man's natural moral state. Still farther illustrations of his meaning may be found in Gal. 5 : 16. "This I say, then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." He subjoins a catalogue of the works of the flesh, and then presents, in contrast, the fruits of the Spirit.

We cannot be mistaken in supposing the apostle to assert that he knows there is no good in his own moral nature, unaffected by the grace of God. Perhaps the term *good* demands a slight notice in this connection ; for we must not conclude that Paul was unmindful of the Psalmist's observation : "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." He should not be regarded as making a sweeping statement ; but as presenting the conviction of his own mind after having compared himself with a particular standard ; namely, the *moral law*. He says, "We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." When thus tested, he saw nothing in himself by nature, which this law could accept ; therefore, he knew there was not the least thing deserving from it, the title good. Except as grace had implanted holiness, he saw himself to be utterly destitute of every excellence demanded by a holy law. If cut off from hope, except as it should beam upon him in consequence of native good, he felt sure that the blackness of darkness awaited him.

My *second* inquiry is, how far we may regard what the apostle affirms of himself, as equally applicable to mankind in general. It may be observed, that there is no special reason for concluding that the moral nature of Paul was constituted of elements different from those belonging to other persons. We have reason to suppose he was by nature one with them ; for he was a descendant of the same ancestry, and possessed of the same general characteristics. On the other hand, there can be produced the most convincing evidence, that what he

affirmed, in respect to himself, is true of every individual of the human family. We hesitate not in the least to lay down the bold and the wide sweeping proposition, that there is not by nature, in any son or daughter of Adam, aught which the law of God recognizes as good. Here I must caution the reader not to confound terms, or involve the exact point of the discussion with extraneous topics. We do not assert that there is nothing in any sense good pertaining to the human mind, even before sanctification is begun. Tried by the standard for the admeasurement of intellectual faculties, or by that, the office of which is to test the natural affections, one's mind or heart may be found to possess a great amount of real excellence, while it is wholly destitute of those qualities demanded by the moral law. The question, whether mankind are sinful in any degree, or if they be so, what is the extent of their criminality, can be answered only by an appeal to the law just named. What then does it require? Perfect obedience to every precept. He that fails at all to meet its claims, sins just so far as he comes short of exact heart obedience. "Sin is any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God." Such is a precise rendering of 1 John 3: 4, which is translated in the common version thus: "Sin is the transgression of the law." Let us settle it immutably in our own minds; for it is eternally established in the moral government of Jehovah, that whatever in human feeling or conduct does not coincide entirely with that law, is sin. But we are now met by a question of vast importance: Who shall judge, when feeling or conduct does thus conform to it, or vary from it? Those blinded by sin, cannot decide correctly, respecting the claims of such a law, since they are insensible to its deep demands. God is the only impartial judge, in questions relating to the claims and prohibitions of his own law; and no other being can know for a certainty how many sins of omission or of commission are chargeable to an individual. Persons

the most spiritually minded, are, in some measure, qualified to decide what is, and what is not, a violation of the moral law ; while those not in the least illuminated from above, have no just ideas of its strictness. We are prepared to resume the proposition already expressed, and to proceed to a consideration of its truth. Its announcement is, that in mankind there is nothing which the moral law recognizes as good. Or in other words, it declares that they are wholly destitute of holiness, without which, no one shall see the Lord. This condition of mankind is more usually designated by the term depravity, and I shall so change my phraseology in the remaining part of this article, as to make it conform to that technicality, and shall pursue the discussion under separate heads.

1. Mankind are depraved. On this point there surely can be but one opinion. Their wickedness is every where most terribly manifest. No age or country has been exempt from the awful developments of their hostility to holiness, and their fellowship with iniquity. Were there no sin on earth, pain, sickness, sorrow, and death, would be here unknown. Nothing of the kind existed in time, previous to the first transgression. Crimes of all descriptions ; prisons, jails, houses of correction, bolts, locks ; guardians by day, and watchmen by night ; officers for arrest, jurors, judges, courts for trial, gallows in use, and in reserve ; strifes, wars, slavery, intemperance, are proofs of depravity. We cannot begin to search ourselves without meeting evidence that we are far removed from moral purity. On this subject the Scriptures are explicit. " God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6 : 5. " The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Gen. 8 : 21. What is here asserted was not more applicable to the generation to whom it primarily referred, than it has been to all persons since. Such language depicts a universal characteristic of our fallen race.

The moral nature of human beings did not change favorably in consequence of the deluge. With reference to a period much later than the occurrence of that momentous event, inspiration has made these records: "The heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead." Eccl. 9 : 3. By the Omniscient Spirit were such unlimited declarations made, and within them are included the world of human beings. Of a similar import is the following: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Jer. 17 : 9. Not merely here and there a heart is thus degenerate, but *the heart* of man, in every age and country, is just as corrupt as the prophet affirms. Not an exception has hitherto ever existed; nor will one appear during the years in which the world may hereafter stand. This same doctrine is taught in those passages which exhibit the necessity of regeneration, in order for admission into heaven. Furthermore, the Bible presents the fact, that without exception mankind die, as proof of the universality of their depravity. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5 : 12. The translations of Enoch and Elijah to heaven, without the dissolution of their bodies, were purely miraculous events.

2. This depravity is total. No reference is had in this proposition to any part of a human being, except his moral nature and character. One's features may be comely; his bodily proportions good; his intellectual endowments high; his social habits excellent, and his regard to the general welfare of society commendable; while the love of God is not in him; yea, while he inwardly and constantly abhors holiness, and curses the only way of acquiring it, the mediation of Christ. Whoever comes short of perfect compliance, in any respect, with the moral law, is depraved just so far as he fails to meet its demands; and entire deficiency on the part of any individual, is proof that he is totally depraved. Now it is a



doctrine of the Scriptures, and of course held by evangelical Christians, that mankind do, in their natural state, invariably fail of meeting the requirements of God ; that in no case whatever does an individual, unregenerate, do any thing pleasing to him. Jesus declared that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If in us naturally, there were even the minutest amount of holiness, such a radical renovation would not be indispensable, for the smallest germ might be cultivated and increased. Moreover, it is presumed that every individual of an enlightened understanding, who becomes a subject of renewing grace, is made to feel that in himself there was naturally no good thing. How emphatic is the Bible : "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him ; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2 : 14. Many of those passages which I have quoted in proof of depravity, are in point under the head of its *extent*. "If one died for all, then were all dead." Did not Jesus Christ lay down his life for the whole world ?

3. This depravity is native. Nor can such a statement be difficult of comprehension. One's native place is that in which he was born, and what is native to a man, was born with him. Habits, though they may become a second nature, are never designated by the term native, because they are acquired. We do not ever style a disease native, however long the sufferer may have endured it, provided he did not bring it with him into the world. An eminent living divine has specified several characteristics of what may be termed native, in respect to the human family. (1.) It is universal, being found in all men, of all ages and conditions of life. (2.) It developes itself in early life. (3.) It can be traced to no change subsequent to birth. (4.) It operates spontaneously. (5.) It is hard to be resisted and overcome. (6.) We can predict with certainty, that it will in due time act itself out. He observes,



that "if we examine any thing, whether bodily or mental, which we consider as natural to man, we shall find that it has these or most of these marks ; and that we have no other way of proving it to be natural but by referring to these very marks." \* In respect to human depravity, it is found that all the above attributes do pertain to it. An acute, ancient writer remarks, "Men do not sooner begin to act rationally, than they do begin to act irregularly. If never so skilful a hand play upon an instrument out of tune, if it sound, it will sound amiss." † Observation proves that the wonderful instrument, the human soul, is badly out of tune. Its disordered state is evinced by every touch from the moral law ; its first notes and all its subsequent ones, till it be put in order by the Spirit of God, are equally dissonant. All persons sin early: "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." But why is this fact universal, if it be not natural for them? "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity ; and in sin did my mother conceive me." If sinning be universal, the cause must be alike extensive. Shall it be replied to this assertion, that Adam sinned without an innate propensity, therefore all his posterity may do the same ? We reply, that his sinning implied a great moral change in him. But nothing of the kind occurs in any of his descendants, when they perform certain external acts, which prove them internally depraved. The transgression of the first man stands marked in the Scriptures as an anomaly in the world ; but the sins of his posterity are every where in that volume set forth as perfectly natural. Still farther, it is a doctrine of revelation, that *in consequence* of the offence of the original pair, all their offspring are sinners by nature. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." No river can be more easily traced to its source, than can the broad stream of human depravity to the first transgression as

---

\* Dr. Woods.

† John Howe.

its source. "The fall brought mankind into a state of sin and misery." What an illustration of this statement, is the fact, that the first child born on earth became a murderer! "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." "By our relationship to Adam, we are born the children of wrath." Yet we do not anxiously inquire for the *precise* manner in which the sin of the parent ruined his race; but the fact that such was its consequence, we do know. Cavillers are at liberty to object to our views, if they desire so to do. Still, we would caution them of the danger they are in, of passing their probation in decrying the existence of the very depravity which alone prompts their cavils, and is rapidly fitting them for unquenchable fire.

#### THE NEW BIRTH ESSENTIAL TO THE ATTAINMENT OF HEAVEN.

##### *What is to be understood by the New Birth?*

On this question, as well as on many others discussed in these pages, the Word of God is of the highest authority. We need only ascertain its teachings. Christ, in his discourse with Nicodemus, termed it a being "born of water and of the spirit," and the purport of this declaration may be gathered from what immediately follows the words quoted: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The same change is denominated in Gal. 6: 15, "a new creature," or creation, as the original imports; and in Tit. 3: 5, "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." We find in 1 John 3: 9, the expression, "born of God." Ezek. 11: 19, contains these words: "And I will put a new spirit within you, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh." In Deut. 30: 6, is mentioned a circumcision of the heart. All these forms of speech, and many others which might be cited, refer

to the change which our Saviour in his conversation, to which I have alluded, styled the new birth. "Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3: 3. In theological terms, it is called *regeneration*, which is of precisely the same import as *born again*. Conversion is also a term used to denote it, though this rather expresses the act of the sinner in turning to God, when regeneration has actually taken place, than the change itself. The new birth implies in its subject a radical moral renovation. It does not affect, primarily or particularly, the physical or the intellectual faculties; these are continued without essential alteration through all the revolutions in man's moral nature. Still, as the whole person feels the effects of sin, so does it the influence of regeneration. In every case of its occurrence, this birth is the commencement of a life in the service of God. Observation, history and the Scriptures, unite in testifying, that mankind are not by nature in a state of friendship with Jehovah. At the first birth, they are destitute of holiness; by the second, they become its recipients. The unrenewed are said to be dead in trespasses and sins, and the renewed to be made alive, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, such as all persons should perform, but which none naturally attempt. That great and happy changes do take place in the moral character of individuals, is too manifest for the admission of a doubt. Some, while sitting on earthly thrones, have renounced a life of pride, and meekly bowed to the King of kings. Those who had exulted in the achievements of their own intellects, and had in their haughtiness despised weaker minds, have, after years of arrogance and folly, abandoned every evil work. In all the pursuits of life, some that had been inflated with vanity, have become divested of it, and humbly submitted to Immanuel. Thousands of prayerless lips and hearts have learned daily to supplicate the throne of grace. Now their chief joy is in petitioning

God for needed mercies, and in thanksgivings for those already received. Profane persons, in great numbers, have broken off from their evil practice, and shudder at the thought of uttering an oath. Their speech, once most polluted, is purified, and hymns of adoring praise drop from their tongues. He whose spirit was consumed by avarice is changed into a man of systematic and enlarged benevolence. The Sabbath has come to be esteemed the day of rest, as holy, delightful and heavenly, by him who had for years despised it ; and he would not, for all the pleasures of time, do aught to dishonor consecrated hours. Of the miserable outcasts from society, whose reformation seemed beyond hope, are found examples of real renovation of life, of genuine faith in the Saviour, and of fidelity to his cause.

Have not my readers seen a great and happy change produced in the moral character of individuals? Yea, have not themselves in some instances been the subjects of it? I refer not to temporary reforms — to superficial improvements, but to that deep and permanent revolution in feeling, thought and action which is witnessed by many, prompting them to exclaim, What a change ! There are examples of an unquestionable character, and which may be seen by any desirous of proof in regard to the fact. It is proper in this connection simply to state, what will subsequently be discussed, that the Holy Spirit is the author of the new birth or regeneration. “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” The movements of the wind may be unknown to us ; but that it is in motion we are convinced from the effects which surely are traceable to such a cause. The Spirit we see not ; his mode of making the sinner anew is wrapped in mystery ; but the products of his skill are open to inspection.



*The Ground of the Necessity of the New Birth.*

Why is the new birth essential to the attainment of heaven? This inquiry merits a careful and thorough consideration. Of those admitting this necessity, some entertain vague ideas of its ground. That man should be subjected to a moral renovation, or be eternally excluded from the society of the holy, is to them an arbitrary requirement; a despotic condition appointed by Christ, on which he will receive persons into heaven. It might be discarded, if he had judged proper; or there might have been a substitute. Such, altogether mistake the foundation of the necessity of the new birth. It is not a mere kingly enactment that demands regeneration, as a preparative for admission into blessedness. It was as true before the Redeemer said it, as afterwards, that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Had the declaration contained in these words never been made, the fact, which they assert, would have been as true as it is now. The nature of things does not depend upon a simple announcement, though it proceed from the Son of God. Holiness and sin are in their natures immutable. One cannot triumph without the defeat of the other. The moral atmosphere of the celestial state is subject to no variations, and for its inhalation by terrestrials there must be a previous preparedness. Further, the employments of the heavenly abode are in their nature unchangeable, and so are its enjoyments. Certain prerequisites for a participation in them there must be, and what in this respect is demanded at one time, is equally necessary at all times. The learned and the illiterate, the wealthy and the indigent, persons of this age and country, and those of every period and clime, must entertain the same views, and possess like feelings, in order to enter the world of glory. Till mankind are born again, they have no moral fitness for the kingdom of God, since none of them are holy by nature.



*Two Specifications.*

But it is needful to enter more into particulars, in order that this want of fitness be made manifest.

1. The unregenerate are morally polluted. Sin may be styled a leprosy on the soul, and while it remains unremoved, it must debar the infected from society morally pure. Could an individual be found who had committed but one sin, his single act of transgression would have fastened a stain upon his soul, which could not be removed, except by the agency that gives the new heart. The person, however, cannot be found, whose sins are few. All are involved in multiplied acts of open and positive disobedience, and have come short of the requirements of God. O earth, thy myriads are without exception great sinners. "The Lord looked down from heaven, upon the children of men, to see if there be any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all become filthy." Ps. 14: 2, 3. In such a condition does the eye of Omniscience behold them, whenever it surveys the children of men. "From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness" in them, "but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores;" which "have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment." Isa. 1: 6. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like; of the which, I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. 5: 19 – 21. Can those so polluted pass into the holy city, over the very gate of which is written in ever-during capitals, "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth"? Reason, as well as revelation, replies in

the negative. But imagine, if you please, one morally polluted in heaven, what comfort could he find there? Lo, he paces along the golden pavement, seeing at every step his own odious likeness reflected from the bright surface on which he treads! Can the sinless angels welcome him to their spotless abode? No, but shunning his presence, they will plead with God for his instant expulsion. Will the saints rejoice in beholding him drawing near to them? They, too, flee from him, fearing his contaminating touch. May he attempt an approach to the Mediator? That is useless, for the intercessions of Christ relate to those on probation, who are yet among the living. "Whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." Matt. 10:33. Suppose he attempt to draw near to the throne of God, every beam of glory falling upon him from it, will smite him with blindness, and repel him with resistless power! In regeneration is commenced a gradual removal of this most fearful pollution. Though the renewed soul is not entirely delivered at once from its vileness, it begins to be cleansed when the new birth occurs, nor will the operation cease, till a fitness for a holy place is completed.

2. The selfishness of the unrenewed prevents their admittance into heaven. They are supremely selfish. While destitute of that change denominated the new birth, the glory of God is not made the end of their efforts, but self-will, in some one of its many phases, is always the object sought. Perhaps it would be impossible to convince one, who has not examined this change, that in every respect he is controlled by a regard to self. The eye of the soul is not ordinarily so enlightened as to see its own motives. Should, however, the change termed regeneration take place in any one, then will the truth of what is here affirmed of him, manifest itself. I am willing, yea, desirous, that the unregenerate should scrutinize the springs of their moral conduct. If they do, occasionally, proceed with the most sacred regard to the honor of the Supreme Being,

doubtless the instances, at least, some of them, are remembered. Can a specification be made? If so, by all means, let it be published as an interesting phenomenon in the moral world. Proclaim it aloud, that such an unrenewed person was at such a time, and in the performance of such an act, influenced solely by a desire, and with a fixed purpose to glorify God! No sinner, whose moral sense is not utterly obtuse, will dare assert for a fact, what the experience of every true Christian knows to be false.

It is a position not to be questioned, that all the unrenewed are constantly under the dominion of selfishness. No uprising of impenitency against this sentiment, can be regarded in any other light than proof of its correctness. Direct now your thoughts heavenward; is there evidence of selfishness existing in the world of blessedness? Contemplate the character of God. Is there aught to be perceived in it which does not harmonize with the most extensive benevolence? Has he an attribute which declares or seems to indicate that he is not *love*? In vain shall the universe be challenged to show an instance in which he has exhibited selfishness. He loves himself supremely, and it would be an awful mistake in him not to do it, for "it would be doing an infinite wrong to the universe." He is immeasurably superior in excellence to all that exists besides himself. Creatures now are, and eternally will be, infinitely less than the Creator. In comparison with the Almighty, other things and beings are as nothing. Contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ in his character as Mediator; he is not selfish; every fact recorded in his history repels the suggestion that he is. Arraign the hosts of angels that encircle the throne of Deity, and scrutinize the motives by which they are actuated; verily selfishness cannot be predicated of them. Their constant aim is to know and do the will of their King. "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty," is their unceasing song. Bring also, to some infallible test, the principles and practices of the saints on high. However selfish they may have been

when tabernacling in the flesh, even after their conversion, it will be impossible to find any remains of sin in them during their residence in a world of perfect purity. Make the most thorough search through all the celestial city, beginning at the pearly gate ; leave no object untested ; range through all the fields of glory, and scale every hill of immortality ; pass into each apartment of the house not made with hands, and watch for a while the operations of the inmates ; explore the archives of eternity ; draw near that throne of ineffable brightness on which the Infinite sits ; gaze upon its foundations, and scan its towering height ; pry into the secret will of the great " I am ; " probe the inmost recesses of his heart ; and when the search shall have been carried so far, that naught in heaven is left untried, then decide, how much of selfishness there is in the empire of love !

O selfish mortal, the dwelling-place of Jehovah has no entertainments for thy contaminated spirit. Wert thou admitted there, thy first enterprise would be an effort to appropriate, to some unhallowed personal use, the very gold with which the New Jerusalem is paved. If there be any one locality in the universe, which concentrates more of insufferable anguish for the sinner than any other, it is the holiest part of the heaven of heavens. Say not that infinite Goodness will in the future state render happy such as spend their entire probation in transgression. What proof would it be of special goodness in God, to place the sinner in the celestial abode, if there, of necessity, he must be in a greater hell than elsewhere ? But the unrenewed shall not enter the world of the blest. The mercy which endures forever cannot lift them, selfish, defiled beings, into the celestial abode.

" Those holy gates forever bar  
Pollution, sin and shame ;  
None can obtain admittance there,  
But followers of the Lamb."



Contemplate heaven in any of the aspects in which it is presented to us in the Scriptures, and the unfitness for it of those not renewed will be obvious. Perfect holiness characterizes that world, but this excellence is not loved by the unrenewed. Only sinless beings dwell there, and the sinner cannot relish such society. An earthly Sabbath is a type of the eternal rest of the saints, yet its sacredness is not loved by those who remain in their natural state. The hosts above, without ceasing, worship God. "And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5: 11, 12. Could the unregenerate take part in such a song? Are they prepared to join in the ascription, "Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Rev. 5: 13. Heaven's anthems must be learned on earth, but none of the unrenewed are yet rehearsing them, or even practising a single prelude. What sentiment can be more manifestly correct, than is that contained in the proposition that *the new birth is essential to the attainment of heaven*? Truth of solemn weight! Who can feel its purport too deeply? Sinners must be born again, or they will be driven into endless woe.

Ye worshippers of pleasure! that insatiable desire for the enjoyments of time which now enslaves you, may attend you into the dark valley of the shadow of death; but thenceforward you must endure pain. No giddy circles lie beyond the grave; there, instead of pleasure, will be realized the torments of the damned. Old companions and yourself may meet, but not with merry hearts, nor with animated countenances. You must wear a despairing look, and forever feel



the gnawings of the never-dying worm. In the cells of earth's eternal prison will be naught to comfort or to break for a moment the anguish of the soul. Ye sons of avarice! your quenchless desire to amass silver and gold, and to add estate to estate, may reign in you till death has silenced your powers, having effectually excluded you from participation in the great salvation; but it will be no sort of relief in eternity to reflect that the whole of probation was devoted to the accumulation of riches. No transfer of your treasures gathered from the soil can be made to the abode of the lost! O, it will harrow the soul to meditate on any period of life passed in pursuit of that which cannot profit; and to think that no pains whatever were bestowed for the acquisition of a new heart; to experience the new birth. The raging desire which is now proving your destroyer, may hereafter be your unceasing tormentor. Your moral nature must undergo a radical change, or you will weep and wail where atoning blood is never applied. Ye who degrade yourselves by indulging in the use of intoxicating drink; revel you can while life lasts; yea, ye may die inebriates, but be assured that no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. The Lord's cup of indignation will be poured upon you without ceasing, unless your course is soon changed, and you become new creatures in Christ. Your dark way descends rapidly to hell. Perdition is at your feet, and the besom of destruction must quickly sweep you from this stage of action.

All ye who live in sin, the particular passion at present ruling you may be predominant in the hour of your dissolution; yea, control the spirit beyond the period of the heart's operations, and be supreme forever. If the new birth do not become yours before the termination of probation, these unbridled desires, appetites, lusts and aims, may endlessly storm the soul, where there is no shelter from their undying rage. On earth there are numerous resorts to gratify the cravings of vicious

habits and propensities ; in that future state the desires may exist, but means by which to meet them must be entirely wanting. If the new birth be not experienced in this life, each passion will, perhaps, eternally harass the spirit. Marvel not that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God ! Without the change, no fallen creature is fit for heaven. Besides, sin has a downward tendency. Its attraction is toward the centre of hell. Were the gate of heaven open to the unrenewed, they could not, by reason of the burden upon them, ascend. Marvel not ; heaven is the dwelling-place of the holy ; and the unrenewed are unholy. Nothing impure can be allowed to enter the city on high. The feet of the unsanctified shall never pollute the soil of paradise. Marvel not ; Christ is in heaven, and where he is the unregenerate cannot dwell. Let this theme occupy every mind. Be it daily remembered by young and old, that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Make it the subject of your daily meditations ; pray over it. Ask whether evidence of the new birth, as having been experienced by you, is evinced in your life. Fail not to make sure of this great change. Destitute of it, you are hopelessly and helplessly lost ; in possession of it, yours will be the kingdom of glory.

#### GOD THE AUTHOR OF THE NEW BIRTH.

##### *The Position illustrated.*

In regeneration, *being* is given to what did not previously exist ; a new disposition is implanted. The subject becomes the recipient of a new creation, and to create is exclusively the prerogative of divine power. Unregenerate persons are said, in the Scriptures, to be dead in trespasses and sins. Allowing the language to be figurative, the import is not a

figure, but a fact. We need not, however, regard the expression as figurative, but literal. Sinners are spiritually dead, and a spiritual death is not less a reality, than is a natural death; and to impart spiritual life to the spiritually dead, is doubtless as difficult, and as much demanding almighty power, as to restore to life the breathless corpse. Careful attention to the moral state of mankind, as they are by nature, discloses the appalling fact, that they are destitute of holiness. But they must become holy, or perish in sin. Holiness is a positive something; though it be not a physical substance, it is a real existence. When it is secured to one by regeneration, he has then in his possession *a treasure* of infinite value. On the native moral state of mankind, the word of God, as we have previously seen, speaks without ambiguity. "There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Rom. 3: 11, 12. Both Jews and Gentiles are under sin. "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one." Rom. 3: 10. Since the *Fall*, the moral world has exhibited but one aspect, except as the grace of God has changed the scene. The earliest and the latest developments of man's moral nature, show it to be deeply depraved, wholly estranged from God, and fearfully set on sin. The heart is the fountain of iniquity, and its renewal affects one's entire character, not by adding to his intellectual faculties, nor by augmenting his physical force, but by turning him in all respects to the service of Christ. The change is great; it is radical; it is far reaching; it is permanent. Spiritual blindness gives place to spiritual sight; and moral insensibility is made to yield; or, in Scripture phrase, the heart of stone is removed, and a heart of flesh is given. Selfishness is dethroned, and only such a regard to self is subsequently indulged, as is perfectly consistent with supreme love to God, and that love which is required to be manifested to fellow-creatures.

The change denominated regeneration, is of such a nature, as to preclude the possibility of its being the result of *natural* causes ; by which are meant such as are continually operating in nature. Nor do the special means of grace regenerate men, for these are enjoyed by thousands, who never feel even conviction. Individuals the most highly favored with religious privileges, are often the most hardened in sin. Noah was a preacher of righteousness ; faithfully, it is presumed, did he warn the people with whom he dwelt, but his labors were not very successful. Lot sought in vain to convince the citizens of the plain that danger was at hand ; he was regarded as a mocker. Such as heard the inspired prophets present the mercies and the terrors of the Lord, in numerous instances became more stubborn under what they heard. Nor did those favored with the instructions of Christ, and his apostles, receive the new birth from the teachings upon which they attended. Solemn events, and memorable providences do not secure new hearts to the witnesses of them. The sudden death of a friend, in no instance regenerates the survivor. One may be exposed to death on a wrecked vessel for days, yet escape with as little religious feeling as he had when overtaken by danger. The miracles of Christ did not regenerate a soul. Men went away from beholding them with the same hearts as they possessed when they came, unless special grace was displayed in their behalf. Indeed, they returned more hostile to the truth than they had previously been.

No person ever regenerated himself. Such an occurrence certainly has not taken place, if no one has power to do it. Is it within the capabilities of any fallen creature, to renew himself? The question is not, whether every man has all the natural faculties requisite to constitute him a free, accountable, moral agent ; for such is the condition of every rational individual. Amid all the revolutions in the character of mankind, free agency and accountability are maintained by God, who



will not permit man to lose either. Can the sinner become a saint, without the special aid of God? To this question the answer is frankly and directly given in the negative. The renewing of hearts is the work of God. Less power than his cannot perform it.

We appeal to the experience of those, who have met with the change here contemplated. Christians are uniform in their testimony respecting the authorship of their new hearts; and they would be shocked by an intimation that the praise does not all belong to God. The language of the Psalmist, whether it primarily refers to this subject or not, expresses their own feelings in regard to it: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Ps. 40 : 2, 3. Augustin tells us, that before he was brought out of darkness, he found the corruption of his own heart such as to baffle all efforts of his own, and that he despaired of relief from himself. Halyburton, who became eminent as a minister of the gospel and as a professor of divinity in Scotland, after striving for a long time to no purpose to obtain peace and holiness by his own efforts, observes: "Woful experience obliges me to acknowledge to my shame, that I never looked towards the Lord's way except when he drew me." Of his regeneration he remarks, "It was what I sought not; I thought not of; I liked not; yea, it was what I hated, feared, avoided, opposed. The work was carried on by the secret, indiscernible power of Him, who is like the wind, blowing where it listeth." David Brainerd says respecting himself: "I could contrive nothing for my own relief. I was brought quite to a stand, as finding myself utterly lost. I saw that it was forever impossible for me to do any thing toward helping or delivering myself." \* The apostle

---

\* See Doct. Tract, No. 19.



Paul sums up the whole matter touching his own case, thus: "By the grace of God, I am what I am." 1 Cor. 15 : 10. What Christian does not adopt this language as true of himself? Few divines have been deemed more excellent in piety, than was Leighton. It is a sentiment advanced by him, that for the heart to renew itself, were as impossible as to have been the author of its own existence.\* "I saw," remarks Andrew Fuller, "that God would be perfectly just in sending me to hell, and that to hell I must go, unless I were saved of mere grace, and as it were in spite of myself." "I tormented myself to death," states Luther, "to procure for my troubled heart and agitated conscience, peace in the presence of God, but encompassed in thick darkness, I no where found peace. It is in vain that I make promises to God ; sin is always too strong for me." One recently deceased, made this record of himself: "It seemed, if God had not determined to make me a vessel of mercy, my wicked heart never could be renewed." † Pages of like language might be filled from narratives, detailing the religious experience of believers. The same expressions are heard in the room of the departing saint. Every new convert to Christ ascribes his change to God.

"Why was I made to hear his voice,  
And enter while there's room?"

The Scriptures explicitly teach, that to renew men is the work of God. We may consider Christ as inculcating this sentiment when he said to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." John 13 : 8. The washing intended, must have been moral, which is nothing less than heart renewal. It is said to the Corinthians, in connection with a description of unholy persons of an abandoned character,

---

\* See p. 140 of this volume.

† Prof. Fiske.

“And such were some of you ; but ye are washed ; but ye are sanctified ; but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” 1 Cor. 6 : 11. The Holy Ghost speaks in the following manner to the Ephesians : “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Eph. 2 : 1. It is added : “And were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ ; by grace are ye saved.” 2 : 3, 4, 5. “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” 2 : 10. In Col. 2 : 13 we read, “And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.” Titus 3 : 5, has this form of speech : “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Other passages from the New Testament, and a variety of great clearness from the Old, might be adduced, if necessary. It is the uniform method of the Scriptures, to ascribe the commencement, increase, and continuance of holiness in man to God.

### *The Mode of Renewal.*

We next proceed to notice the mode in which God renews men. But let the reader not misapprehend the point at which we aim. Our divine Master has said, that “the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth ; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” John 3 : 8. We inquire not for the exact mode by which divine agency operates in the renewal of sinners, for this must be a profound mystery. Still, some facts are revealed in respect to it, and these we may, without presumption, examine.

1. God renews men by his Spirit; or perhaps we should rather say, God the Spirit, renews them; for it is the appropriate work of the third person in the Trinity to perform this important office in the economy of grace. He is, we know, often mentioned as an *influence* sent forth by the Son, or by the Father; and it is true that his office, in the mediatorial dispensation, is subordinate to those of the other persons in the Godhead.

2. In the renewal of a sinner, his free agency is not destroyed, nor is there any interference with it. The Creator of the human soul so constituted it, that he can influence it, at pleasure, without in the least embarrassing free agency. How improbable that he should have given existence to intelligent, accountable beings, whose conduct and will he could not control, unless he should first destroy their mental activity. Two facts are obvious, viz.: God does work in men, both to will and to do; and yet he does not infringe upon the freedom of their choice. The first of these facts is abundantly asserted in the Scriptures; the other is proved by consciousness. Here, we admit, that it is utterly beyond our ability to define fully how the human and the divine agencies coöperate.

3. Divine truth has an important place in connection with the renewal of sinners. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth." This is the instrument of conviction, but not the efficient cause of conversion. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." One office of the Holy Spirit is to convince of sin, and for this end scriptural truth is indispensable. All the intellectual faculties are necessarily exercised in the life of devoted piety. The mind should always be conversant with sacred truth. It is this which reveals the character of God; exhibits the moral law and lays open the duties of man to his Maker. If, without divine truth, the sinner might be made to feel himself guilty, he could not know

the precise character and degree of his ill desert. A great preparatory work is requisite, in order that a transgressor be made to realize the danger of his position, his need of help, and the source whence it must come ; and, in this service, divine instruction is needful. God intends, also, that all whom he constitutes new creatures, shall entertain exalted views of his work in them, and for this end he speaks in most explicit terms of its nature. The Scriptures abound with instruction on this point, and the Spirit impresses their weighty teachings upon the mind of the converted. Again ; the renewed are immediately turned from the error of their ways. Now, in breaking off from sin, and in taking up the duties of righteousness, they must be regulated by the written word of God. We have the whole expressed thus : "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness, but unto us, which are saved, it is the power of God." 1 Cor. 1 : 18. Truth cannot change a heart. Even the most eloquent presentations of it avail nothing toward salvation, when the Spirit does not attend it. "I have planted, Apollos watered ; but God gave the increase. So then, neither is he that planteth, any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." 1 Cor. 3 : 6, 7. In renewing men, the Spirit is not dependent upon truth, but ordinarily he displays his saving power only where it is exhibited. The greater our fidelity in efforts to *save* others, if they are made in accordance with divine appointment, the more numerous will be the monuments of grace. It is rare for those to give evidence of having been born again, who are not under the influence of religious institutions. Such as *wilfully* neglect gospel privileges, generally bear the marks of reprobation.

4. The operations of the Spirit are directly on the heart, when he radically changes it. Unquestionably the Spirit has much to do about the heart, in numerous instances in which regeneration is not effected ; but the nature of that renewal



wrought in the sinner, also Scripture statements, show it to be a fact, that the Holy Ghost does act directly on the heart. It is a new heart, a new creation, that constitutes one a regenerate person. The intellect needs no radical change ; the physical nature of man does not require renovation. These are both suited to the service of God, provided they are controlled by sanctified affections. Why should the action of the Spirit be on the truth ? Does that demand regeneration ? Surely not. It is perfect. Shall we take the ground, that the whole office of the Holy Ghost is to present motives before the mind, and that in this way the sinner is influenced to become a new creature ? Such a view of his work implies no radical change in the subject. If motives can renew the heart, then it is not badly depraved. For they can do no more than to influence choice, which sways action. Therefore, if one is made right by motives, he is simply under some mistake, and not in a state of settled hostility to holiness. His alienation from God must be regarded rather as the result of unfavorable circumstances than of native rebellion. A sentiment that men are converted from the error of their ways, simply through the influence of motives, finds no support in the Scriptures, nor can it in any system of theology which rests upon them. The evil, which the Spirit seeks to remove, lies in the heart, and there must the remedy be applied. It is this which is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." The Holy Ghost undertakes to remove both the deceit and the wickedness. Of course, he must go where they are. Circumcision of the heart is a form of expression, appropriated by God himself to designate the work of renewal. The thing done is likewise expressed by the figure of taking away a heart of stone, and substituting a heart of flesh ; one that feels. A new disposition is implanted ; new affections, principles, desires and purposes are granted. The Spirit does not improve upon the moral state already existing, but lays a new foundation and rears a new superstructure, and all this takes place in the heart.



5. The influences of the Spirit are, in every instance of renewal, so powerful as infallibly to secure the end designed. God never undertakes to save an individual, being himself uncertain of the result. Sinners cannot defeat his purpose, if he be determined to renew them. It is not improper to speak of *irresistible grace*. Should the language of Stephen be adduced as an objection to the term, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost;" our reply is, that those to whom he refers, were none of them regenerate persons. Of all the unregenerate, it is true that they resist the Spirit of God. It is equally true, that the regenerate have ceased to resist him, and the only point of controversy there can be, is this, whether the sinner ceases to resist the Spirit and then God renews him, or whether his ceasing is the consequence of renewal. Is not the carnal mind always arrayed against God? Does not the unholy heart of necessity oppose Him? So far is it from being true that the sinner ceases to resist the Spirit, *before* that holy Agent regenerates him, that the Spirit must give him *a new heart*, or he will persist in his course of opposition; hence, when he has been made to yield the contest, his surrender shows him to be a new creature.

6. Invariably those influences by which a sinner is renewed, are *special*. Connected with the means of grace are what may be termed, common operations of the Holy Ghost. If these were improved, the result would be most happy. God will be disposed to have mercy on those who cherish the gentler movings of his compassion. But these ordinary influences of the Spirit may be resisted; they are, doubtless, in all cases. The charge which was brought against the Jews by that devout man styled the first Christian martyr, is equally valid against all hearers of the gospel who remain impenitent. It demands the *special* agency of the Spirit to regenerate the heart.

7. Regeneration is an *instantaneous* change. Long may the Spirit strive with a sinner, and in various ways guilt may

be exhibited to his mind ; but all which occurs of that nature is simply preparative, and no part of regeneration itself. For thousands of years, things were arranging for the coming of the Messiah, yet there was a first moment when he began to be an inhabitant of the earth. "The beginning of a thing cannot be progressive." What is not from eternity, must, at some fixed, definable point of time, enter upon existence. The *new* heart of any particular sinner has not always been in being ; therefore, at a certain definite moment, it began to exist. Such a position would hold good, were we to allow that men became regenerate by degrees. For, take what point you please in one's progressive improvement, and it must be admitted that he is either regenerate or unregenerate ; he cannot be both at the same time. Somewhere along in the scale of advancement there must be a moment when he is not regenerate, and a next, the very next, when he is regenerate. But the doctrine, that sinners become new creatures in Christ by degrees, is not in the inspired volume. Sanctification is progressive ; but regeneration, the commencement of sanctification, is instantaneous. The child of God, like the infant, grows till he becomes a man. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4 : 6. In the original creation of light, the Almighty spake and it was done ; and thus it is, when the dark cell of the sinner's heart is illuminated with beams from the Sun of Righteousness. Total darkness is pierced, as in the twinkling of an eye, with a ray from heaven.

8. In renewing men, God effects an enduring change in their moral natures. The gracious heart once imparted, is never withdrawn. "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11 : 29. The divine purpose to renew, relates to all the necessary gifts subsequent to the imparting of the new heart. It includes justification, adoption,

sanctification, and life eternal. What design could the Almighty have in regenerating a soul, that shall everlastingly perish? Can he trifle with a creature so much as to give him a foretaste of heaven, and then allow him to fall into hell? "He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1: 6. Persons renewed by the Holy Ghost, will not be shut up in despair. God does not banish into outer darkness his own dear children. The disciples of Christ cannot spend their eternity with the servants of Satan. The prey once rescued from the destroyer, shall not return again to be devoured by him. Individuals who have learned to lisp the song of the redeemed, will not be left to wail with the damned.

*Why does God renew Persons?*

Some are regenerated, and others are not. Wherefore the difference? Shall we conclude, that he selects his candidates from a certain description of character? If so, why does he thus discriminate? But are they not of all ranks and conditions? Does not the Spirit proceed apparently without any regularity? How often is the first made last, and the last first! Who can form any conjecture as to what persons in a congregation will be made subjects of grace in the day of God's power, and who will be suffered to remain in the hardness of impenitency? One is taken, another is left. There a parent is subdued, and his children are unaffected. Here the children all become disciples of Jesus, and both father and mother are unmoved. Bosom companions, too, are often thus spiritually divided. It may be observed, that the renewed are not constituted the recipients of saving grace on account of native goodness. Mankind are all without holiness by nature, and are children of wrath. "As in water, face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." The prince and the prodigal

are the same in the estimation of *Him*, who is no respecter of persons. Nor is it because of partiality in God, for he is not partial. This fact himself asserts, and we also have evidence to the same effect in the developments of his grace. There is such a confounding of all distinctions among men, as to prove the absence of favoritism. However we may speculate on this subject, the only conclusion to which revelation brings, is that God is influenced by a supreme respect to his own glory. "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?" Dan. 4: 35. "Of his own will begat he us." James 1: 18. In conferring special gifts upon individuals or nations, God proceeds according to his own sovereign pleasure. "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion; so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Rom. 9: 15, 16. In acting according to his own independent will, he has regard to the greatest display of his own perfections, and this end coincides with the best interests of his empire. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created." Rev. 4: 11. The ultimate end of whatever the Most High has done in the kingdoms of nature, providence and grace has been to exhibit divine excellence. Any other object would have been unworthy of the Almighty. The same design that has guided him will continue to do it forever, and the more the glory of God is illustrated, so much is the holiness, the happiness, and the highest good of the universe promoted. The number of the regenerate will be according to the requirements of this great ultimate end of creation and redemption. Jehovah is not restricted by a want of power. He does not pass



by some because he cannot subdue them, for all are in his hands. No limits bound the displays of regenerating grace, except such as are fixed in view of the eternal lustre of his name. The doctrine contemplated in the article before us lays the axe at the root of the schemes of self-righteousness. No man is a friend of God, because of an illustrious origin, or because he is distinguished for talent; nor is he so on account of wealth or learning. The sons and daughters of the Lord have become such in consequence of interposing sovereign grace. Let them ascribe all the praise to the eternal God.

“ Then let our souls adore our God,  
Who deals his graces as he please;  
Nor gives to mortals an account,  
Or of his actions or decrees.”

Many a rebellious heart may rise up in hostility to the sentiments here advanced. But will the truth be affected by a phenomenon of this sort? Not at all. One thing is often, I say not always, fairly inferable, when the doctrine of divine sovereignty in the renewal of sinners is opposed. Those manifesting such hostility are yet heirs of hell. Impenitent persons do not love to think that it lies wholly with God, whether they are born again or not. Urge upon their attention the inspired declaration, “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth;” and they indignantly demand, “Why doth he yet find fault, for who hath resisted his will?” In reply, we have only to repeat the words of one whom the Holy Ghost taught how to meet such a cavil. “Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?” Rom. 9: 20. Let all who do not wish the question of their salvation or eternal ruin to be settled by Jehovah, obtain otherwise than through his grace, deliverance from merited wrath, if it be



possible. But they may be assured that their hostility to the doctrine which is here laid before them, will not induce the Almighty to form them into vessels of mercy.

“ May not the sovereign Lord on high  
Dispense his favors as he will,  
Choose some to life, while others die,  
And yet be just and gracious still ?

“ Shall man reply against the Lord,  
And call his Maker's ways unjust ;  
The thunder of whose dreadful word,  
Can crush a thousand worlds to dust ? ”

#### THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION.\*

No one conversant with the sacred volume, can be unacquainted with the fact, that it contains *a* doctrine of election. We read of elect angels, and Christ is denominated elect. Israel was an elect people. According to the sincere and decided belief of many Christians, there is in the Scriptures, what may be designated *the* doctrine of election. It is my purpose now to contemplate this article of faith ; showing, first, what it is not, and then what it is, as revealed in the oracles of God.

#### *What it is not.*

It is not *fatalism*. Such, however, is the opinion of it entertained by some. They suppose it to deal out salvation or damnation without the least regard to personal character. One class inherit life everlasting, simply because they were elected, and those of another are driven into outer darkness for the sole reason that they were not of the elect. Individuals imbibing such ideas of this doctrine are quite mistaken ;

---

\* No. 8 of the Doct. Tracts contains a very able discussion of this doctrine.

since *fatalism* is not an item in the creed of the Orthodox, though the doctrine of election is embraced by great numbers of the most eminent followers of Jesus; and by those, too, who entertain very impressive views of human responsibility. The strongest defenders of this doctrine are generally the most consistently active in the service of Christ. Augustin and Calvin, those champions of the cross, whose labors were exceedingly great and preëminently owned of the Holy Spirit, were firmly established in the belief of the doctrine under discussion. Whitefield strenuously contended for it. Writing to one with whom he had a controversy respecting it, he says, "I am ten thousand times more convinced of it, if possible, than when I saw you last." He observes, "I never read any thing Calvin wrote; my doctrine I had from Christ and his apostles." To a friend, Robert Hall once observed, "I believe firmly in election." Among the early settlers of New England, were many decided advocates of the doctrine; yea, those whose preaching and other pious labors laid the foundation of all that is truly excellent in this section of the world, maintained, undoubtingly, this article. And, verily, were that class of believers now removed entirely from these favored States, we fear that our beautiful heritage would soon revert back to heathenism. The standard religious works, which are employed by God as instruments in promoting the salvation of thousands, may I not say, of millions, are, the most of them, certainly the *best* of them, pervaded by this very doctrine. It may not appear in a technical form, but it is in them. This statement is true of the writings of Baxter, Bunyan, Doddridge, Matthew Henry, Thomas Scott, Chalmers, and a long list of others, on both sides of the Atlantic. Mr. Barnes affirms, that if the doctrine of election were not found in the Scriptures, "the scheme of revelation would be taken out from all the analogy of the world." He adds: "To us it seems, therefore, that *they* strike a blow of no ordinary violence and

boldness, who denounce the purposes of God, in the Bible, as dark, partial and malignant." This doctrine forms an article in the Episcopal church, and has been held by all the great lights in that denomination.

Election does not teach or imply, that any are excluded from heaven, who seek admission in the way divinely appointed. Christ died for *all mankind*, and by his death he removed every barrier to man's salvation, except what lies in human depravity. The gate of heaven is sufficiently opened, and the charter of redemption is comprehensive enough for the world to be saved, provided the terms of life eternal are universally embraced. Never did one humbly strive to enter into covenant with the Lord, and find himself repulsed because he was not elected.

Again ; there is not in this doctrine, aught which clashes with the freeness of the gospel ; those holding the former, believe in the latter ; nor are they inconsistent in so doing. To accuse them of blindness, or of maintaining contradictory positions, betokens a great want of candor on the part of those who bring the accusation ; yea, it involves them in the guilt of defaming the saints of the Most High. Still further, the doctrine of election does not teach that any will be saved merely on account of their being elected. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. It is frequently, though wickedly affirmed, that if the doctrine be true, those embraced in it will be saved whether they repent or not. Indeed, it is declared by its opponents to be of no consequence what the elected do, or neglect. Be it remembered that certain facts are revealed in the word of God, which can never be set aside by any philosophical speculations. One of these is, that the new birth is indispensable to entering heaven ; and another is, that the regenerate will not be saved, if they do not persevere in the divine life. Crowns of glory are in reserve for none who do not prove faithful unto death. If any of the elect come

short in this respect, they must perish, notwithstanding their election. At the final day, the destiny of each will be determined, not by this or that doctrine, but by the character possessed. It is the *righteous* that are saved, and it is the *wicked* who are damned. The holy are welcomed into the kingdom of glory, and the unholy are driven into darkness and despair.

It is proper to observe, also, that the doctrine of election gives no countenance whatever to a neglect of the means of grace. Whoever despises these gracious provisions, must reap the fruit of his folly in groans that end not, and in tears that avail not. In sacred, not less than in secular concerns, means and ends are inseparably connected. "Be not deceived ; God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

*What it is.*

Certain preliminaries here require attention. Mankind are in a fallen state ; their depravity is deep and native. All are under condemnation, and to deliver themselves is beyond their power. No one can redeem himself, or do aught to merit the favor of God. Uninfluenced, except by the goodness of his own nature, Jehovah provided a Saviour. He so compassionated the world that he sent his Son to die for it, and in the expiation which was then made, obstacles which in themselves were insurmountable, and would have forever shut the sinner out from God's complacency and compassion, were entirely taken away. Salvation is sincerely and freely offered to all mankind. No class or individual is excepted. Terms more unrestricted than are those contained in the gospel, there cannot be ; and naught but the perversity of the guilty prevents their being accepted. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Who will dare question the veracity of the Al-

mighty, thus confirmed by an oath? How tender and earnest are his calls upon the rebellious to submit themselves to him! Christ in unqualified terms, seeks to allure to himself the perishing, assuring them, that whosoever comes unto him, he will receive.

Still it is an established fact, that the salvation provided by sovereign mercy does not meet a cordial reception among sinners. It is a point settled, that no one, left to himself, takes hold of the divine provision. The benevolent arrangements of the Most High are neglected, yea, despised, not because of a deficiency in the natural ability of human beings, but for the simple reason that they are not relished by the heart. "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." And in still stronger language, the same truth is set forth by him whose lips never uttered error. "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him."

With these preparative suggestions, all of which must commend themselves to the candid mind, and which are also illustrated by observation and experience, I proceed to a direct presentation of what the doctrine is.

1. While sinners, every where, *naturally* reject the offers of mercy, those terms of reconciliation with God through Christ, some, nevertheless, do accept them. Wherever the gospel is preached, individuals are melted, subdued, and do present pleasing evidence of having become savingly interested in religion. In other words, they appear to have been born again. The difference between them, and people in general, is striking; and their subsequent life exhibits a marked contrast with what it had previously been. Once, they were carnal, but now are spiritual. The will of God has become their adopted rule of duty. In all such apparent cases if the change be real, it is permanent, and is the result of the special operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart.

Those, thus renewed, are chosen of God to receive the blessing bestowed; for the regenerating Spirit goes only



where he is commissioned by the Father and the Son; and these proceed in accordance with a perfect plan. Every instance of conviction and conversion, is the result of a divine purpose. If there be a purpose including a great number, they all will, in due time, be made to bow humbly at the footstool of mercy. Not one embraced in the merciful designs of Jehovah will be omitted, *when the "jewels" are made up.*

2. Such as become the recipients of sanctifying grace, are not chosen on account of any qualities inherent in themselves. Morally, all men are by nature alike, being destitute of holiness, and opposed to the Almighty. Intellectually, the monuments of mercy present as great a diversity as do those who continue aliens from God. The subjects of the Spirit's operations are truly diversified in their worldly circumstances, and in their mental lineaments. Among the monuments of grace, there have been not a few who once ranked as the worst opposers of religion. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "The elect are not chosen because they are better, but that they might be better." Jehovah is influenced by a regard to his own glory, in every step which he causes to be effective toward the salvation of individuals, and he, "out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life."

3. All who are renewed, God *eternally* purposed to conform to the image of his Son. Whatever he now does, he always intended should be performed, just as the event takes place. His thoughts never change; his plans are never remodelled. With him there is only an eternal *now*; so that it may be correctly affirmed in regard to him, he is no older at this hour than he was infinite ages since; nor will he be at any point of the endless future. Time measurers have no relevancy to eternity.

What gives to the *purpose* of Jehovah, in regard to the salvation of individuals, that peculiar repulsiveness which it has,

as the subject is contemplated by some minds, appears to be the *eternity* of it. But whatever God does, is from eternity. Nothing originates with Him in time. Our existence, and all the circumstances of it, were present to Him myriads of ages before we actually came into being. We are not to suppose that divine decrees are limited to one particular. "For his own glory He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."

The doctrine of election may, then, be succinctly stated thus : God had a purpose to renew, sanctify, and save some of Adam's lost race ; this purpose is eternal, and extends to every one who shall finally be an heir of salvation. By it none are excluded from heaven, for all will perish if left to themselves. Election does not rest upon any real or supposed good, in the subjects of it ; they are no better by nature or by practice, before they are transformed by the Holy Ghost, than are the non-elect. "Those whom God predestinated to eternal life, he also predestinated to saving grace ;" otherwise they would abide in unbelief, for "the Scriptures every where represent the elect before their conversion as being in the same guilty and perishing state as the non-elect."

That the doctrine now explained ought to be received, if it be true, who will deny ? And that it is true, if the Bible contain it, all that acknowledge the inspiration of this book must admit.

*The Doctrine established by the Scriptures.*

I shall adduce a variety of phraseology, bearing more or less directly on the subject. Christ, predicting a time of great distress, says, "And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved ; but for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened." Matt. 24 : 22. And in close connection with this passage, occurs the following : " For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great

signs and wonders ; insomuch that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24 : 24. In the same chapter is this statement, " He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt. 24 : 31. In Luke 18 : 7, we read, "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" Rom. 8 : 33, contains this question, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Addressing the Colossians, an inspired apostle exhorts them "to put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, kindness," etc. This same apostle speaks of himself in another place as "enduring all things for the elect's sake," 2 Tim. 2 : 10 ; and again as an apostle, "according to the faith of God's elect." Tit. 1 : 1. The first epistle of Peter is sent to the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." 1 Pet. 1 : 2. These are some of the instances in which the term *elect* occurs. Now if there be a class of elect persons, then there must have been an *election*. Hence we find the Scriptures speaking of it. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Rom. 9 : 11. "Even so, then, at this present time also, these is a remnant according to the election of grace." Rom. 11 : 5. "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it and the rest were blinded." Verse 7. The justification which the Lord's nominal people had sought in vain by works, is secured to the elect by the gracious purpose of God. "As touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." Rom. 11 : 28. "We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers ;" "knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." 1 Thess. 1 : 2, 4. Do not the texts now cited prove conclusively, that the subject under discussion was familiar to the minds of the New Testament writers? That the Bible contains the doctrine in some form "is so palpable, that to

deny it would be equivalent to the rejection of divine testimony." And in regard to *the* doctrine, one has well observed, "if it be not revealed, we think it impossible that it could be revealed in any language." What sentiment is more clearly expressed?

*Election is Personal.*

It is evident from Scripture, that the elect are *individuals*, and that their election is *personal*. Facts prove that some nations, and smaller communities, are chosen to peculiar privileges, but particular persons are elected to eternal life, and their election is denominated *foreordination* and *predestination*. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." Rom. 8: 29, 30. Here is a golden chain extending from foreordination to glorification, with its several links distinctly marked.

Corresponding with the preceding, is the following: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children;" "being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. 1: 3, 4, 5, 11. It is here affirmed, that individuals are chosen that they should become holy, and not because of holiness in them. Conformity to the divine will is a consequent upon election, and not the occasion of it, as some argue. Predestination is said to be in conformity to the good pleasure of God, whose will is the mainspring of all his purposes.



The sentiment that God elects individuals to eternal life, on account of some excellence already possessed by them, or as foreseen to exist at some future time, does not harmonize with the teachings of inspiration. The *holy* are heirs of heaven without being elected; *that* world is their home, as matter of course. Only those, however, are sanctified, who have been elected. It is true of all whom the Spirit renews, that there was a divine decree to that effect, and this decree was eternal, and founded in the free, independent, sovereign will of the Lord. Had no plan been formed in the infinite Mind, to rescue from the dominion of sin any of the ruined race of man, not one would be saved; since all, when left to themselves, prefer the way of death to that of life. They shun heaven, and rush to hell. Personal election, so explicitly taught by particular passages of the Bible, is implied in every part of it. Salvation is uniformly presented as entirely of God. Human merit is such an amount of ill desert as demands of justice eternal banishment from blessedness into endless burnings. The experience of all true and enlightened believers harmonizes with the teachings of inspiration. It is plain to the meek Christian, that if God had not mercifully interposed for him, he should have perished in unbelief. Of all the saints it is certain, that the *first* step towards their renewal was not taken by themselves. Nor would any of the efforts which they have since put forth, have succeeded that moving influence of the Spirit, had not grace secured them. No one asks for a new heart, till the Holy Ghost creates the desire, and impels to the offering of a prayer, that it may be imparted. "By the grace of God I am what I am."—"Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." Such are spontaneous acknowledgments from the intelligent and devout of every country and clime.

We may find an analogy to this doctrine in the *providential* government of God. Each day affords evidence that the



divine decrees relate to all events. The Almighty is ever accomplishing his own purposes, causing creatures and things to reflect his glory, and what he now brings about he eternally planned. What multitudes of elections there are yearly set before us. Here one is raised from obscurity to fill a high station, whereas, had not a special providence shaped his course, his name would never have been heard beyond the scenes of his nativity. Some are chosen to inherit great riches, while others are left in abject poverty. A class are elected to live to more than fourscore years, yet millions die in childhood; yet all are subjects of the Lord's purposes. Mental endowments lodge in human souls, not by chance, but in harmony with the will of Him, who gives or withholds, raises up or casts down. Jehovah's present proceedings were eternally determined by him. He has a providential control of the world, and his "works of providence are his most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions." Whether we are pleased or not with God's entire and absolute sway in the world, he exercises it.

Thus the doctrine of election is distinctly and fully established by the Scriptures; it is also illustrated in the experience of enlightened believers, and, moreover, has an analogy in the dealings of the Most High with his rational creatures, in respect to all their interests on earth.

#### *A Word to its Opposers.*

A truth so solemn and so intimately connected with the present and future destiny of mankind, cannot be wholly destitute of a practical bearing; and we must conclude that opposition to it is really, if not intentionally, arrayed against its *author* — God. That almost blasphemous language, which is sometimes uttered concerning it, is contempt of an infinitely benevolent plan of Jehovah. Shall we say it, ridicule is

employed to bring the doctrine of election into reproach. Woe to those who strive against their Maker with such a weapon! We hope it may be said of them, "they know not what they do." If, however, they act understandingly, then do they exhibit manifest tokens that themselves are reprobates! Let this doctrine be met by its rejecters, on scriptural grounds. Cavilling at sacred truth is a direct method of procuring a fearful condemnation for the guilty. The facts involved in this article of faith will stand in spite of all efforts to annihilate them or weaken their power. "Future scenes shall reveal their unchanging verity, in signals hung out from the rending earth and the blackened heavens." God will vindicate his purposes, and overwhelm in endless woe the proud despisers of his electing love.

The opponents of election are thrown into an affecting dilemma. If they regard themselves as Christians, and if they be truly such, then are they arrayed against the very scheme of divine goodness by which they have been translated out of darkness into the kingdom of Christ; yea, they are controverting a point, the truth of which their own conversion seems to confirm. What but election brought them into the fold? If they be not Christians, their hostility is aimed at a doctrine which furnishes the only ground of hope that they will ever become the followers of Jesus. Surely, their love of sin is so great, that they will die in its embrace if not snatched from it by Omnipotence.

With deep seriousness I would propose the question, and urge its consideration: To whom should the saved give the glory of their salvation? According to the doctrine of election, it belongs solely to Jehovah; but why may not man, in part, at least, claim it, if this doctrine be discarded? Let its rejecters prepare pæans to sing in praise of themselves! Ah, we ask them first to pause and inquire *where* they can stand in heaven and exult in their own glory? The Scriptures do

not intimate that any from earth will enter the New Jerusalem, who cannot and will not ascribe all good in them to unmerited mercy. Are we told that none think of detracting from the honor of Jehovah? Do the rejecters of election say that themselves, equally with its receivers, admit that eternal life is entirely of free grace? Then do we reply, that their rejection of the doctrine is unreasonable, and, viewed in their own light, their course seems to involve self-contradictions. Whoever acknowledges himself indebted wholly to the grace of God for salvation, avows, by *implication*, all which is contained in the doctrine of election. I question whether an acceptable prayer was ever offered to the Lord, in which there were not admissions inclusive of it.

Humble disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus will not be apt to express themselves rashly concerning a truth which their Master frequently inculcated. Christ preached election, and rejoiced in it greatly. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." He assured his hearers, that divine favors are dispensed just as the will of God decides; that "the last shall be first and the first last," that "many be called but few chosen." The believer, if he understand at all the nature of sin, cannot but attribute to free and sovereign grace, his hope of heaven, and, in doing this, he virtually and of necessity, acknowledges as true, the elements of this much despised, yet important doctrine.

What occasion have the impenitent to thank the Lord that he has a purpose of mercy for any of their number? for, if they be left to their own sinful choice, perish they must. Salvation they will never secure, while not drawn by the Father. But admitting the truth of this doctrine, it is possible that the compassionate designs of the Holy One embrace their souls.

*Certain Objections.*

I cannot conclude this discussion, without alluding more definitely to certain objections which are made to the doctrine of election. Scarcely any topic to which the pulpit or the press directs attention, is more violently assailed than is the one before us. Some insist that it exhibits God as partial in the bestowment of his grace. To this objection, our answer is, that God declares himself to be *no respecter of persons*. He discriminates and makes distinctions among his creatures; but in so doing, he is unjust to none. Every mouth will be stopped at the judgment bar, and none should now dare to reply against God! Thy probation, sinner, was given thee, not to pour the venom of thy heart upon that wonderful scheme by which heaven is to be filled with adoring saints. God is righteous; thou art unrighteous. Submit to him, and thou shalt be saved; resist him, and he may leave thee to drink of the cup of his indignation forever. Bow at once before *Him* whose sovereignty may save thee from hell, or give thee over to the horrors of the second death, which thou dost now deserve. I should as soon think of trampling under foot any other portions of the sacred volume, as those which teach and illustrate the doctrine of election. My only hope of success in the gospel ministry is founded on the belief, that God has an eternal purpose of mercy toward, at least, some of those to whom he has commissioned me to preach. I know that it is not in human skill or power to prepare a child of Adam for heaven. Those who listen to my voice will not come to Christ, unless influenced from above, nor will they be graciously drawn if there be no divine purpose to that effect. O mighty Jehovah! thou knowest that thy servants who speak in thy name are shut up to one hope, and that their hearts must sink within them if that cannot be indulged. Encouraged by



it, they can cheerfully enter the valley of dry bones and prophesy upon the slain, for thou canst raise up a vast army of believers from the most unpromising subjects.

I must warn those, coveting the name of Orthodox Christians, to beware how they treat the doctrine of election. Often has it been cast as a stigma upon the heaven-honored band with whom they are united. As if its advocates were dupes, or the lowest of rational creatures, they are denounced as unworthy the name of disciples. Associated with the *libellous* assertion, that we believe in infant damnation, the term election has been hurled upon us, as if it were a thunderbolt that must crush us forever. No man is truly orthodox, who does not, *in heart*, receive all which election implies. Intellect may be weak or confused. Babes there are in Christ, but they are *elected babes*. We will not reject them, though they must be fed with milk and not with strong meat. We will utter no anathemas against the disbelievers of election, but will indulge with comfort the hope that even they may be among the *elect*.

#### HUMAN AND DIVINE AGENCIES ARE COÖPERATIVE.

Truths do not mutually conflict ; facts are never really at variance one with another, though they may often be so in appearance. Man is a free accountable agent, and God is an absolute sovereign. Both of these positions assert immutable facts. Some persons, not being able to perceive how there can be two such facts, deny one or the other, giving over to nothingness this or that, just as their feelings incline them at the particular time, when their minds are exercised in relation to the subject. I shall here attempt to illustrate this proposition : *In the salvation of an individual, his own agency, and that of God, coöperate.*

1. In the salvation of an individual, his own agency is exercised. I argue, first, from the nature of the case. Salva-



tion is something, as the proposition implies, to be obtained. It is the great acquisition for which an immortal being should strive. Eternal life is a theme to which no considerate mind can be indifferent. Let one be awakened to a sense of his danger as a sinner, and he cannot be inactive. Now, none are saved without being made to feel, to some extent, their peril. A glimpse of one's own exposure to hell, will start into action every energy of his immortal spirit ; yet no sinner is saved, who has not had some sense of his awful condition. It always appears to the awakened, that they have a great work to perform, and they cannot be quiet ; each will ask, What must I do to be saved ? They cannot but exert themselves to obtain salvation.

I argue, secondly, from analogy. Our choicest blessings, or those attainments which we value most, are procured by great effort. Industry is necessary to subsistence ; or if not actually essential for this, it is to any rational enjoyment. What real satisfaction is there, without toil ? Sleep and sumptuous fare will not secure even terrestrial happiness. Hard labor is required, in order that our couch comfort us, and our food benefit us. Knowledge can be acquired only by dint of persevering effort. Wealth is the result, usually, of much endurance. No art or science can be acquired without earnest and long continued exertions. Is every thing else valuable, to be procured only by great zeal, and the most strenuous aims, and shall the pearl of infinite price call for no action, no awakening of the mind ? Is it not natural to conclude, that the crown of glory can be won only by those who agonize for it ? Can the plaudit, " Well done, thou good and faithful servant," ever be pronounced on one who has not diligently exerted himself ?

I argue, thirdly, from the Scriptures. They address the sinner in a way that shows clearly his part in securing salvation. He is called upon to repent, and is assured if he do not,

he must perish. No other being can repent for the transgressor. God and his angels may feel compassion for him, but they cannot exercise penitence for him ; that is a duty which himself must discharge, or it will remain unperformed. Godly sorrow for transgression is peculiar to those who are guilty ; none others can feel it. Not only is repentance a duty, but it is the sinner's first duty. While it is neglected, no service can be rendered to the Lord. That is his earliest step in the path of obedience, and it belongs, in all cases, to the guilty. I speak not now of the efficient cause, but of the act itself.

Again, faith in Christ must be exercised, in order to salvation, and it is the individual who must believe for himself ; no other person can do it in his place. It is not possible for Jehovah to accept a substitute. He that believeth not, shall be damned. There are also many practical duties, so binding, that they cannot be omitted without perilling the soul ; as for instance, the renewed must acknowledge Christ before the world. Individuals are required to perform this act for themselves. Each has a responsibility, which he only is able to discharge. Though ten thousand others avow publicly their adherence to Christ, what they do, in no degree releases any person beside from doing the same thing. " Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father, which is in heaven." Matt. 10 : 32. When a public profession of religion has been made, the obligations of a church member are assumed. These are solemn, and cannot be cast off. " Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." John 15 : 14. " And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. 25 : 30. To the great Head of the Church, each must give account for himself. Neglect of any precept, a failure in respect to the right use of a talent cannot be overlooked by him who says, " Occupy till I come." New creatures in Christ must persevere in all the branches of

religious requirements. Each is to press onward for himself; one is not authorized to do it for another. Substitution is unknown in the responsibilities of the Redeemer's family. "He, that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." Matt. 24: 13. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2: 10. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Phil. 2: 12. The obtaining of eternal life is likened to a pilgrimage, a race, a warfare. Zeal, never-dying, and efforts which never slacken, are requisite. The slothful perish. We must agonize, or not enter the kingdom; we must fight, in order to win the prize.

2. The agency of God is exercised in the salvation of each individual saved. Without divine influences, none are saved. Such is the power of sin, so entirely are mankind under its control, that where divine efficiency does not interpose, the soul remains a willing slave. "They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God." Hos. 5: 4. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5: 40. So deep rooted, so inveterate is sin, the subjects of it are so entirely bound by it, that Christ says, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." John 6: 44. While every obstacle lying in the way of the sinner's salvation, arising from the law of God, has been obviated in the atonement by Christ, there are other hindrances originating in human corruption. Not even a resolution is formed to abandon any of the paths of wickedness, till the Holy Spirit excites to it. Emotions of grief are not felt before the energies of the Lord cause them. Nor are the Scriptures *duly* estimated, till their value is exhibited by him who inspired them. However much they may be prized on account of their civil and literary influence, their holy requirements and their positive prohibitions are naturally abhorred. "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the

flesh, cannot please God." Rom. 8: 7, 8. The agency of God is employed from the first step onward through all the subsequent stages, till the soul is wholly sanctified and admitted into heaven. The renewal of the sinner is peculiarly and entirely the work of the Spirit, by whom all the regenerate have been renovated. Of this fact, themselves are confident; they know that they are indebted to sovereign grace for the commencement of holiness in their hearts. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Titus 3: 5. Faith is the gift of God; so are all the graces which flow from the new creation. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory." Ps. 115: 1. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." 2 Cor. 3: 5. "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7: 18. Salvation is wholly of grace.

" Grace led my roving feet  
To tread the heavenly road;  
And new supplies each hour I meet,  
While pressing on to God."

3. These two agencies, the human and the divine, coöperate in respect to every individual saved. Both, we have seen, are called into exercise; each is necessary, indispensable, and we know that they coöperate, for they harmoniously tend to one result. Yet one must be regarded as the prime mover. The efforts of one excite the other. Which is first? Can there be any doubt in respect to the point? Is the sinner dead in sin, and does he exhibit signs of life before the power of God is felt? Reason surely cannot be in doubt as to the answer. The sinner in no case moves in the work of his salvation, till the Spirit influences him. We are not considering what he



*ought* to do, but what is the *actual* state of the case. Verily, every man should seek the Lord with all the heart; yet no one does seek him at all, except he be influenced from above. God is the first and the efficient cause of all the steps in the return of the sinner from his wanderings. But, though the divine agency be earliest, the human is soon in operation. The time intervening between divine interposition and action on the sinner's part, is doubtless too short to be calculated. The *moment* the Spirit touches the heart, the latter feels. Regeneration itself is an instantaneous change; of course, the subject of it is not in a state of dormancy, for the renewed immediately begin a life of holiness, and leave at once the paths of sin; do not in the least linger. The Lord grants quickening grace, and the recipient instantly shows signs of being quickened. He is no sooner touched, than he manifests evidence of the fact. God convicts, and the sinner is convicted. Repentance is granted, and it is exercised. Faith is given by God, and the recipient believes. The Almighty turns the wanderer, and he turns. Being drawn, the sinner runs to Christ. In all respects, the two agencies coöperate. The human would not move, did not the divine bring it into action; and the divine will not benefit, if the human do not unite with it. Moral beings are treated as free accountable agents in all the influences which God brings to bear upon them. Their activity is at no time destroyed by divine interposition. "It is the dictate of right reason, that no created being is capable of acting independently. Universal and absolute dependence goes into the very idea of a creature, because independence is an attribute of the divine nature, which even Omnipotence cannot communicate." Yet creatures are "able to act in the most free and voluntary manner, while they are acted upon by the immediate power and energy of the divine Being." Many start back with horror when their dependence upon God is declared; but no gainsayings can annul a fact. Some may



insist that their freedom is destroyed ; but how could they be more free than they are ? Does not consciousness tell them that they have entire liberty of choice. Shall we be terror-struck at the announcement, that the Lord works in creatures both to will and to do ? Surely the pious rejoice in the fact. Were God to take away the free agency of the sinner, wherein would the latter be injured more than he is now by the abuse of it ? Suppose that for a short space of time this attribute of a human being should be annihilated. During that period, the sinner could not be accountable, and, of course, his case, in the judgment of God, would be in no wise more dreadful than if he had continued all that time active. Suppose, too, that on regaining his free agency, he should find that he had, during the interval, become a new creature in Christ, would not the gain be infinite ? Why do persons tremble so much lest their own free agency shall be trammelled ? It would be a mercy to millions were it destroyed, but it will not be lessened.

The spiritual economy of God has an analogy in his operations in the natural world. In him we live, move and have our being. We are dependent on him for existence, preservation, and every comfort. Literally, we can do nothing without him. The soils, the streams of water, the atmosphere, every thing proceed from him. Having the ground given us, we must till it ; yet our labors will not avail, if God do not grant the sunshine and the shower. What man would ever behold a blossom in spring, a waving field in summer, or a ripening harvest in autumn, were it not that Jehovah produces them ? Still man's agency is employed, and is variously essential. The Almighty must go before him, and then go with him. Who can move about without illustrating the combination of two agencies, the human and the divine ? I will not affirm, that in respect to this subject, any analogy is perfect ; though it may be strikingly illustrative of important points in the

system of grace. Our final appeal must be to the Scriptures, and in them we find these two agencies not only recognized, but represented as essential and coöperative. The Lord commands Israel thus : "Circumcise therefore your heart and be no more stiff-necked." Deut. 10 : 16. He also says, "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayst live." Deut. 30 : 6. The Psalmist observes, "I will run the way of thy commandments when thou shalt enlarge my heart." Ps. 119 : 32. "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Prov. 16 : 1. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2 : 1. "Awake, thou that sleepest, and rise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Eph. 5 : 14. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Ecc. 9 : 10. "For without me, ye can do nothing." John 15 : 5. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." 1 Cor. 10 : 12. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1 Pet. 1 : 5. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16 : 31. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God." Eph. 2 : 8. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2 : 12, 13.

#### *Deductions.*

Thus does it appear, that in the salvation of an individual, his own agency and that of God coöperate. There are certain deductions, which naturally follow from the preceding discussion. (1.) Those who are not working out their salvation with fear and trembling, cannot have entered the way to heaven. If the use of certain means be essential to the

securing of an end, a neglect to use them must be succeeded by a failure in respect to that end. Now it is manifest that no probationer can reach the heavenly city, without performing a pilgrimage thither. An immortal crown cannot be obtained; except by running the Christian race. Salvation is a problem to be worked out; nor will the solution in any case be complete till the threshold of heaven has been passed. Whoever, therefore, is not toiling for the prize, has no prospect of its becoming his own. That eminent apostle, who was sent forth to be the champion of truth among the Gentiles, after having long preached and prayed, observed: "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away." 1 Cor. 9 : 27. (2.) It may be inferred that only those in whom God works both to will and to do of his good pleasure, attempt to secure their own salvation. True, all persons are most solemnly and unceasingly obligated to be entirely devoted to the Lord; but they cast off fear, and will not frame their doings to turn unto their God, till influenced so to do, by the omnipotent agency of the Spirit. Nothing hinders them but sin. This, however, is an effectual barrier; it disinclines them to the performance of any pious service. Hence the sinner's dependence on Jehovah for convicting and renewing grace, is absolute and unalterable. The impenitent, left to themselves, will never attempt to change their moral natures. If God do not convict them, they will remain unconvicted. Their flinty hearts will continue flinty forever, if not broken by the Holy Ghost. No one dead in sin, will arise to spiritual life, till quickened by the energies of the Spirit. The question, to whom are we indebted for salvation, is easily answered. Speculation in regard to it is unnecessary; for one great fact in relation to it, stands out most conspicuously. The doctrine of dependence is fundamental in the gospel scheme of salvation. Would that every unrenewed person could see that his

eternal destiny lies at the sovereign disposal of that God, whose law he has broken, and whose grace he has despised." (3.) It is natural to infer, that those in whom God works to will and to do, will, in every case, work out their own salvation. The divine efficiency brought to bear upon the heart, will be the occasion of an effectual activity on the part of the subject. The regenerate do not go by compulsion in the way of obedience, but they do go in that direction, being made willing in the day of God's power. No man can become the recipient of the Holy Ghost, and not zealously inquire, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" That religion is worth nothing, which does not constrain the possessor to conform his life to the divine rule. (4.) Evidently those who believe that it depends entirely upon themselves, whether they are saved or not, and those who do not regard themselves in any way responsible in respect to their souls' welfare, are equally mistaken. Human zeal alone is not sufficient. Still the most strenuous efforts are necessary, in order to become an heir of glory. The kingdom of heaven must be taken as it were by violence. Ye dying, guilty children of men, pursue, on the subject of religion, that rational and consistent course, which you do in regard to the things of the earth. Agonize to enter the strait gate. Be intent upon treading the narrow way which leadeth unto life. Cast yourselves, as unworthy of the least compassion, at the footstool of God's sovereignty, being determined to perish pleading for pardon, if the celestial city must be eternally barred against you. But never will the future state reveal the fact, that one of the millions descended from the first pair, was driven to hell, when penitently supplicating forgiveness through the merits of Christ. Let sinners every where, awake to their spiritual need. The ark of safety is near, and may be entered by all who would glorify God in being saved.



## WHAT THE SINNER MUST DO TO BE SAVED.

When as on the day of Pentecost many are pricked in their hearts, and say, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" or, when one anxiously inquires, as did the *jailor*, "What must I do to be saved?" all needful instruction embraces only a few words. But religious teachers sometimes meet with persons requiring *preparatory* directions, and to this class my hints are offered.

1. Religion must be *regarded and treated* as the most important of all concerns, in order that its blessings be secured. Simply to admit that it is of surpassing value, does not suffice. It is not difficult to express so much interest; it requires but little moral courage to do it. Almost any individual, who is not given over to a reprobate mind, will allow that the interests of the soul infinitely surpass those of the flesh. Many theorize well enough on the subject of religion, whose practice proves that they do not attend unto the things of their peace; but their thoughts and words, however correct, avail nothing. If one be not so intent upon securing life eternal, as to abandon every associate who is hindering its acquisition, he may be assured that he does not treat it as its importance demands, nor as he will be under the necessity of doing, before its blessedness can be made his own. We cannot doubt that many have gone to perdition, because they could not persuade themselves to forsake the companionship of the wicked. Yea, we suppose that thousands, who were once almost induced to be Christians, now wail in endless misery, because they were not *quite* willing to break off from sinful alliances. A correct treatment of religion furthermore demands an entire rejection of all books, and other publications, which tend directly or indirectly to prejudice the mind against the precepts and requirements of the gospel. The Spirit of God will not long abide with him whose



mind is daily polluted with the products of fiction. Still further, there must be a shunning of all places in which divine truth is not respected. A faithful discharge of duty may require one to go, where he should by no means be seen, if not impelled by necessity; but it is tempting the Lord to leave us to destruction, if we voluntarily throw ourselves into the midst of the unrighteous: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men." Again; a suitable treatment of religion, implies a most devoted attachment to the means of grace. We cannot secure the pardoning mercy of the Lord, while neglecting his institutions. The Scriptures must be studied. Prayer, secret, social, and public, can never be regarded with indifference, and yet the divine complacency be enjoyed. No one who violates the fourth commandment is beginning to be adequately interested in his soul's eternal well-being. He that desires to be saved, should, in every thought, word, and act, manifest an all-absorbing concern, in regard to the forgiveness of his sins, and his acceptance with God.

2. A sinner, in order to be saved, must choose the method provided by God in preference to all others. There is, we know, but one way of escaping the desert of sin, and of enjoying the blessedness of pardon; yet on the supposition that heaven were attainable by some human expedient, the Lord's plan should be chosen, because it is the offspring of infinite wisdom and benevolence. Great numbers there are who sigh for salvation, yet persist in treading the road to ruin, because they cannot enter heaven by some human device. Often individuals, like the leprous Naaman, are displeased with the simplicity of the divine provision. They wish to be bidden to do some great thing. Not a few might be found, who would not hesitate to undertake a voyage around the globe, if having performed such a circumnavigation, eternal life would be theirs as a consequence. Yet not one of them could be persuaded to comply with the requisition of Christ, and enter a closet for

secret prayer. Others profess a willingness to relinquish thousands of dollars for the sake of a title to a celestial inheritance, who could not be induced to cast unobserved into the treasury of the Lord, for a charitable object, even the smallest pittance. Persons have been known to traverse forests in the darkness of night, and to wade through streams of water to attend exciting religious meetings, when, if there had been at the next door to their own, a company of the Saviour's most devoted followers engaged in humble, *quiet* worship, they would not have entered the place. Such is their fondness for excitement, and their love of display, that this class have no idea of being Christians, if it cannot be proclaimed in all the region around them that they have performed a wonderful pilgrimage, or endured a striking hardship. Alas, how often is a mere passion for mental stimulus, mistaken for an interest in divine things ! Some are wonderfully attracted in any direction whence comes the tumult of many voices ; and thither they will rush. Let an ignorant fanatic, who cannot read a verse of Scripture, declaim with stentorian voice on religious subjects, and lo, a congregation, greater than is ordinarily found in sanctuaries on the Sabbath, would soon gather about him. Impostors have always understood that element of depraved human nature, which is carried captive by whatever exhilarates the mental faculties. It matters not what may be the specific aim of a deceiver's efforts, for if he can excite people, he may be sure of multiplying followers. But it ought to be known, that there is no religion in mere noise ; and that to obtain an inheritance with the saints, demands a deeply solemn concern, and the most profound thoughtfulness. Who has ever become a child of God without secret communion with himself ? Mere human vociferations have necessarily no more connection with the production of grace in the soul, than has the murmuring of a brook, or the clatter of machinery. It is a doleful mistake to suppose that mental

commotion constitutes a part of religion, or that religious uproars are sanctioned by the word of the Lord; "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

The way of life prepared by the Almighty, and delineated with sufficient clearness in the Bible, requires a renunciation of all self-righteousness. What merit has the sinner? Is not his demerit infinite? We may *claim* eternal wrath as our due from the hand of our God, but naught besides: "For the wages of sin is death." Not only must the sinner give up the idea of good in himself, whereby he may obtain the favor of the Lord; it is also necessary that he should, *with all his heart*, seek forgiveness. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." There is a day of grace for mortals, and it is limited; therefore, its moments are exceedingly precious. Broad and descending is the road which leadeth to death, and to escape from it into the narrow way of life, requires the most strenuous exertions. He that would become a follower of Jesus, must so count the cost beforehand, as not to be intimidated by dangers or hardships, or be discouraged on any account. A fierce warfare is always commenced against one, when he begins in earnest the pursuit of life eternal. Many are the influences which resist his good purposes. Few of the impenitent, we fear, are prepared to encounter all the difficulties which meet them. Multitudes, after having put their hands to the plough, look back, and thus show themselves unfit for the kingdom of God.

3. The sinner must repent of every sin he has committed, and exercise faith in Christ, in order that his soul be saved. And what is it to believe in him? Has the term faith, more than one signification? Yes, it has various shades of meaning. In its religious use, it implies a reception of the prophetic announce-

ments concerning the Messiah, and the testimony of the evangelists in respect to him ; entire confidence must be placed in the Scripture account of his advent, life and death. And so much is requisite as a preparative to the reception of Christ as the soul's Saviour. We cannot believe in him as a Redeemer, while rejecting any part of the inspired record pertaining to him. On the other hand, it is possible to receive all this undoubtingly, and yet to fall short of that faith which secures salvation ; for we must feel ourselves ruined and lost if Jesus do not interpose in our behalf. So long as one indulges the thought that he may somehow help himself, he will not commit his immortal interests unreservedly to Christ. A sinner, though trembling in view of his condition, cannot be relieved, till turning away from all other resorts, he comes to the Mediator, and throws himself, for the present and for the future, upon sovereign mercy. It is an established principle in the economy of grace, that human devices shall be forsaken before Jesus can be embraced by faith. As wretched and perishing, as guilty and hell-deserving, the sinner must from the heart say,

“ Here Lord, I give myself away,  
' Tis all that I can do.”

Ye shall “loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations.” Such language as the following is highly expressive of the feelings which every one must imbibe who would hear the consoling announcement, Thy sins be forgiven thee. “O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee.” “Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up.” It is important to observe, that a perception of the divine law, in its strictness, and as having been violated innumerable times, is a prerequisite to believing in Christ.

Again ; the faith of which we are speaking, implies a total surrender of whatever we possess to him that loved us and



died for us. We have, in his own words, the terms of discipleship. "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." Matt. 10 : 37, 38. It is of no use for us to undertake to be, in some respects, in league with sin, if we would secure the approbation of Christ. Nor is a limited surrender to him among possibilities. A trade may be taken up for a year, and then abandoned; but one cannot say, I will serve the Lord for a season, and then, if I please, return to the way of sin. The decision, to be for God, if made at all, is to continue while existence shall endure. A choice is made between heaven and hell, and whoever chooses the former, does it for endless ages. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Jesus promises rest, not simply for a day or a week, or a year or a century, but a rest which shall remain to the people of God when the heavens are no more, and while the endless cycles of eternity glide. Faith in the Lamb of God is a far-reaching act of the mind. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Blessed results and wonderful — an infinite effect from, shall we say, a finite cause?

REPENTANCE.

Repentance is a word of frequent occurrence in the sacred volume. Christ's forerunner came preaching it; and when our Lord himself began his public ministry, he did it by proclaiming this doctrine. It is recorded of the first going forth of the apostles, that "they went out and preached that men should repent." Ever since their time, special prominence has been given to this subject by ministers of the gospel. It may be said of them in respect to it — "line upon line, line upon line." If the hearers of truth be not brought to repentance,



then does preaching become to them a "savor of death unto death."

*True and False discriminated.*

There are two varieties of repentance which may be designated religious, each of which is frequently brought to view in the Bible. I shall describe both; exhibiting their characteristics as given by the sacred writers, and I shall first consider the true.

In the following passage its source and effects are designated: "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation." Whoever is exercised with deep contrition for sin as committed against a holy God, will, as here implied, reform in conduct; and the change thus begun, continues till heaven welcomes to its own blessedness the subject of it. Such, in general terms, is genuine or evangelical repentance. But it may not be amiss to enter somewhat into particulars on this vital subject.

1. The sorrow felt by a sinner under conviction, is always in view of the odiousness of sin, provided the repentance be genuine. A sense of having done wrong is deep and pungent; the soul's inmost recesses are penetrated by it, and the penitent person appears extremely guilty in his own estimation. It is not a fear of consequences chiefly, or in any great degree, that troubles the individual, but it is a consciousness of ill-desert; of having disobeyed God; of having dishonored the divine law, and of having cast contempt on the character of the glorious Jehovah. Such repentance is, in every case, the fruit of the special operations of the Holy Spirit. It is his prerogative to convince of sin; he, and he only, makes the sinner sensible of guilt. No reasoning of man or angel can do it; miracles cannot originate convictions; alarming providences alone never occasion it. Godly sorrow is uniformly produced by God the Spirit.

2. True repentance is unto salvation, for the Scriptures assure us, that "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation." It does not cease to be exercised, while he who has once been the subject of it has any sin over which to sigh, or any guilt which needs pardon. Hence, godly sorrow attends the Christian while he remains on earth, for the last remains of his depravity are not removed, till his arrival at that point where his probation terminates, and God's retribution begins; that is, his entrance into heaven. We consider this repentance as a constant characteristic of every real believer, and it is constantly working in him "unto salvation." It does not sometimes thus work, and sometimes otherwise work or not work at all; but it unceasingly works in this one way. Therefore, if it be true in respect to any person, that he has begun to exercise godly sorrow, it is morally certain that he will thus continue. Salvation has commenced in a soul, if this repentance be there exercised. Those who mourn for sin, after a godly sort, are impressed with its wrongfulness; of its infinite ill desert; and they hate it, and desire to be free from it at once and forever. Consequently they exhibit just that mental state, which God requires as a prerequisite to the acceptance of pardon; and to them, the sovereign dispenser of mercy proclaims it.

3. It is a repentance of which no one repents. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of." A period is rapidly approaching, when every one will review the history of his life, and rejoice or weep over it. Many will mourn on account of their course, when grief cannot avail; but for the repentance we are now considering, none will ever feel regret. But the fact, that they did exercise it, will be remembered with joy through ages without end. No rational being can repent of possessing that which insures eternal blessedness. Though true repentance be destitute of merit, it is nevertheless inseparably connected with heavenly

felicity. As soon, therefore, will a saint repent of being in heaven, or a Christian pilgrim of being on his way thither, as a true penitent, repent of that repentance which is an essential preparative for the enjoyments of the sanctified.

*Examples of True Repentance.*

David exercised it after numbering the people contrary to the will of God. "I beseech thee, O Lord, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly." 2 Sam. 24: 10. So did he repent when penning the fifty-first Psalm. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." Numerous other instances of this penitence are exhibited in the writings of that illustrious ruler. Many of the Psalms are penitential. This repentance is developed in the prayer of Ezra: "O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee my God; for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespasses grown up unto the heavens." Ezra 9: 6. Job was under its influence when he said, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Job 42: 6. So was the publican, while smiting on his breast and crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18: 13. This repentance is illustrated in the case of the prodigal son; his confession originated in it. "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." His sins he knew were against God, and he felt their guilt to be a vast oppressive load, and his repentance was sincere. Multitudes on the pentecostal day exercised the repentance which is unto salvation. In later times, yea, in our times, many have given proof of its being their own, by the bringing forth of those fruits which are meet for repentance. It is attended with great humility. The subjects of it are brought into the very dust, and they feel that they cannot get too low before the Lord.

We will now notice the other kind of repentance, and see what are its characteristics. It is styled, in the Scriptures, "the sorrow of the world." It is such a sorrow as those exercise who have no just views of God's holiness or of their own sinfulness. People that love iniquity are often seen repenting; their grief is sometimes great. None but the Omniscient God can number the tears shed daily in connection with this species of repentance. Mankind are disappointed in their plans of selfishness, and they mourn, either because their enterprises were undertaken, or for a want of success. Evils result from particular courses of conduct, and the sufferers regret having entered upon them. Men of the world do not consult the mind of the Lord with reference to any of their purposes, and, when defeated, they repent, because of the failure, and not on account of their own guilt in going without being sent. Could the wicked carry out their desires, they would show no signs of repenting, however perverse their hearts and heaven-daring their aims. Now just such a repentance as this exists in connection with religion. Many exercise it, and imagine that they have obeyed the command *to repent*. Consequences stare them in the face; they are alarmed; the moral law thunders; hell's flame flashes; the ever-devouring worm and the quenchless fire fill them with fear; but sin is loved, and there is no abatement of attachment to evil practices. This repentance "worketh death." So excessive has been the grief of disappointed persons, that in many cases they have put an end to their earthly existence by an act of suicide. Others, preserved from doing violence to themselves, have so brooded over their misfortunes, as to occasion pining sickness and premature dissolution. But this repentance does not affect temporary interest chiefly, for it worketh the *second* death. It is purely selfish, and therefore entirely sinful, having no respect to God, the Being against whom sin is committed. Fruitless plans, however wrong in his sight, would



still be approved by their authors, had prosperity attended them ; more of their tears are shed for guilt ; hence God can never wipe them away. The hearts of those exercising this repentance are still full of rebellion, and, were it possible, the Judge of all the earth would be *compelled* by *such* penitents to repair their past losses and grant them future success in sin.

*Examples of the False.*

A dishonest person may often exercise this repentance. Suppose he defrauds to the utmost his fellow-men and has no thought of giving up this course, till suddenly the veil is lifted and his iniquity is revealed ; then, at once, he is penitent ; confesses and sues for pardon. But the excitement raised against him passes away, and he pursues the same line of wickedness again. I knew a man whose crimes had carried him to the state's prison, where he seemed to become a penitent and actually professed piety. When his term of punishment expired, he came out, appearing as a gentleman and a Christian. Thus he continued, till the community, in a measure, had forgotten that he had ever been a criminal ; then he began anew his former career of wickedness, and the last information that I ever had concerning him stated that he was on trial for another offence, which would probably send him into close confinement for a term of years. Many, when accused of crimes, deny every charge, till evidence of their guilt becomes overwhelming ; then they will acknowledge the whole, and with much weeping ask forgiveness. But could they have concealed their sin, they would have exhibited no sorrow for it.

Pharaoh's repentance was this sorrow of the world that worketh death. Bowed by the mighty hand of Jehovah, he said, "I have sinned this time. The Lord is righteous ; and I and my people are wicked ; entreat the Lord," and "I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." Intercession was made



for him; but when the judgment had been withdrawn, "he sinned yet more and more, and hardened his heart." The first king of Israel made many confessions of guilt, when called to account by Samuel the prophet, or if his folly were otherwise exposed; but he did not produce such works as evince godly sorrow for his transgressions. We are sure that the last act of his life is decisive proof, that however many times he may have had another heart, he never had a *regenerate* heart. The unprincipled Ahab, who had *sold* himself to do evil, was, at one time, apparently much humbled. Dire judgments were denounced on him and his posterity. He rent his clothes; put mourning upon his loins; fasted; lay in sackcloth and went softly; yet he died an enemy to God. One of his last acts was the imprisonment of a prophet, because the latter declared, "As the Lord liveth, what the Lord saith unto me that will I speak." 1 Kings 22: 14, 27. The repentance of Judas was of this same description. In a deliberate manner he agreed to betray his Lord and Master for about fifteen dollars, which was the price of the meanest slave. He had hints from Christ respecting the wickedness of his purpose, and there was enough space for godly sorrow; but he persevered and even *sought* opportunity to perpetrate his premeditated infamy. Still, when the dreadful deed was performed, and he saw how contemptible in the eyes of men he had rendered himself, then he repented; not, however, because he had sinned against God, for he proceeded to sin yet again, but on account of the consequences; and he went away and hung himself. Such, I repeat, is the grief of great numbers, who are alarmed lest the wrath of God shall send them to hell. Their sin is cherished, but they fear divine indignation; punishment is dreaded, though transgression is approved. In their distress they call for mercy, long and loud, till nature sinks with exhaustion; the excitement passes off, fear is gone, and they regard themselves as new converts; very happy, too, they are sometimes. Alas!

their joy is not in God, but in themselves ; they have no fears of hell, and therefore can exult. Probably there is not, in any such case, the least sorrow for sin, otherwise than as it exposes them to punishment ; take away the penalty, and the penitence will disappear.

The two kinds of repentance here explained and illustrated, are exhibited by different words in the original of the New Testament, *Μετάνοιά* and *Μεταμέλομαι*. Our language has not those nice distinctions which characterize the Greek. When it is said that angels rejoice over a repenting sinner, his repentance is designated by a word differing from that employed to point out the repentance of Judas. When sinners are called upon to repent, it is to exercise the repentance which I first described. The last named is common, the other is rare. All the pious have exercised *this*, and exhibited works which are its natural fruits. They also daily repent of the transgressions and omissions, of which they are more or less conscious. Having beheld the spirituality of the divine law, and having seen themselves in its light, they know that they come short, and sorrow after a godly sort over their failures in duty. It is one of the clearest evidences of being a new creature in Christ, that one feels himself to be a miserable sinner, and momentarily in need of divine grace.

The impenitent, of every place and description, must become subjects of *true* repentance, or perish in their sins, for the way to heaven cannot be entered, except by going through this gate. Whoever does not *thus* begin to seek for treasures in the skies, has no prospect of dwelling in the Zion above. If a doubt rests on any mind respecting this point, it should be banished without the least delay, for if it be permitted to linger, it may destroy the soul. He that hesitates in regard to this doctrine, is liable to be suddenly driven into outer and utter darkness.

None who exercise this repentance will perish. It is unto

life eternal ; is indissolubly connected with the joys at God's right hand. Fundamental principles in religion are not of a changeable nature. A man cannot be a penitent, and impenitent at the same time. No one is a believer in Jesus according to the gospel, and subsequently an unbeliever. We cannot walk in the way to heaven in the forenoon, and hellward in the afternoon. It is not possible to possess the spirit of Christ one hour, and the next to be filled with the spirit of devils. True repentance is unto salvation ; wherefore, he whose sorrow for sin does not reach so far, has not repented to any good purpose. All his grief, groans, tears, cries, and promises, avail him nothing. Should he perpetuate them eternally, they will not benefit his soul. God's wrath is not withheld from men, because they would escape it, and still cling to their sins. Law never releases its claims upon the guilty, on account of their dread of its penalty.

The second kind of repentance, described in this article, forms the foundation of many false conversions. I have already alluded to the method by which they are produced. Also, they have been vastly multiplied through the agency of those, who do not distinguish between truth and error. Such accessions as they make to the company of professed believers, add nothing to Zion's beauty or strength. Converts thus formed will soon fall away ; they must be re-converted, or die impenitent ; for theirs is only the sorrow of the world, which worketh death.

In conclusion, the writer would express the hope, that the subject treated thus briefly, will not be turned aside by the reader ; for God " now commandeth all men every where to repent," and this edict of his will never be revoked. At the bar of retribution, to which all men rapidly haste, they shall be approved or condemned, according as they have obeyed it or refused compliance.

## THE FORGIVEN SINNER.

To forgive sins is a prerogative of God, which can belong to no mere creature. Man is able to unfold the nature of forgiveness, and to explain the terms on which it is bestowed ; he can also pray that his fellow transgressors may be forgiven ; moreover, he can forgive offences committed against himself, so far as they are against him only, but if God do not forgive the violators of the divine law, they must remain the subjects of unpardoned guilt.

Forgiveness is a word which, like repentance, often appears in the Bible. The idea it contains is sometimes expressed by other terms. Pardon signifies nearly or quite the same thing, and occasionally justification is employed in a similar sense.

Sins cannot be annihilated. When forgiven, they are not, strictly speaking, destroyed. Though all men should be brought into a state of reconciliation with God, and henceforth should not commit sins, their former acts of disobedience would remain acts of disobedience forever. The forgiven are delivered from the penalty, justly their due, and threatened against them while impenitent ; hence they can never so come under the condemning sentence of the law, as to suffer from its inflictions. Yet the sinner is as destitute of personal merit after he is forgiven, as he was previously. It is solely through the merits of Christ, that any are forgiven. A varied phraseology is employed in Scripture, to set forth what is implied in forgiveness. The sins of the pardoned are said to be taken away, blotted out ; and God declares that he will remember their iniquities no more. The import of all such expressions, I understand to be, that the forgiven sinner shall never suffer the punishment due to his sins. Jehovah will not visit their iniquities upon them. It is necessary, however, in contemplating the condition of the forgiven sinner, to enter somewhat into particulars.



1. His *relation* to God is changed. Once, he stood among the rebellious, with his heart full of hatred, and his hands raised in opposition to the Lord of hosts. He contemned the law of God, and the gospel of Christ, neither fearing divine indignation, nor respecting divine compassion. At a great moral distance naturally from his Maker, he was removing farther and farther; no thought was more terrible to him than that he was a subject of a holy inspection. Were it possible, he would gladly have escaped from the knowledge and control of his Maker. Holiness he wished to annihilate, and he abhorred Jehovah, because of the perfections of that infinite Being. While the pure spirits above encircle the effulgent throne, pressing to the utmost limit allowed in their approaches to Him who sits upon it, rebel spirits seek the greatest attainable distance. As the angelic hosts go far out to execute the orders of their King, they hasten their flight, and speed the performance of their duty, that they may early return to that central point of attraction, the Holy Lord God. To be near an object of supreme affection, is always desired, and Jehovah being that object, those who cherish high spiritual affections desire to be near to him. Nor is the love of saints and angels greater to God, than is the love which he exercises toward them, for they are esteemed by the Almighty according to their moral worth, which is always in exact proportion to the holy love which they exercise towards him.

Once, human beings, when the race consisted of only two individuals, loved the true God supremely. The morning of Adam's existence was bright and promising; but suddenly a change occurred, and the ever blessed Creator ceased to be regarded as the only object of supreme affection and worship. Since that mournful change, the race has been alienated from God. Every generation has been composed of the children of disobedience. Whatever mankind may decide respecting themselves; whatever opinions they may form in regard to



the moral character of their fellow-men, the Lord declares them all in a state of rebellion. A controversy has been long going on, between the Omnipotent Sovereign of the universe, and the revolted inhabitants of earth. Who shall triumph? Is there room for doubt? Can puny creatures successfully contend with the all powerful Creator? Verily, it is not possible. What then have men reason to expect from the hand of him, whom they vainly oppose? Can they receive aught but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish? Hear, O perishing mortals, a voice from heaven: "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways." Comforting language; God is desirous that those who are impotently and foolishly resisting the claims of his law, and ungratefully receiving the tokens of his goodness, should repent and be forgiven. Behold the prospect brightening! Jehovah's compassion for the sinner has developed itself in a wonderful manner, by providing pardons for the penitent.

Convinced of his guilt in being a rebel, and of his folly in attempting to oppose the Lord, encouraged by the assurance of pardon, if penitent, and drawn by the cords of mercy, the sinner renounces his transgressions, prostrates himself in the dust, cries to God's only Son for pity; the eye of the Saviour turns upon him, and a voice sweeter than the song of a seraph, says, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." Lo the sinner wipes away his tears, owns Jesus as Master, looks heavenward, and says, "Abba Father." The fiery wrath of injured justice is appeased, and the sword once bathed in the blood of Immanuel, no longer demands the death of the pardoned penitent. Angels rejoice over the newly forgiven, and heaven itself seems animated with increasing joy. Changed indeed is the condition of him, whose transgressions are forgiven, whose iniquities are blotted out. He is adopted into the family of God,

and henceforth receives fatherly treatment at the divine hand. A course of spiritual discipline is commenced with him, which will be continued by that Being who cannot err, till the subject of it is prepared to enter into the joys of an eternal kingdom. Jesus the great Shepherd receives the pardoned into his own fold, and watches over him with unceasing vigilance and unfaltering kindness. Every day such an one may affirm, "I shall not want." The forgiven are assured that God does not pain them unnecessarily, but that he will chastise them as his wisdom and benevolence shall deem best. They are upheld by his almighty power, and nothing shall do them essential injury. Before he was forgiven, the sinner was regarded and treated as a rebel against the government of God. Now, he is esteemed a loyal subject, an affectionate child. In forgiveness is implied every blessing, which the soul of man can need, either in this world, or in the next.

2. The *feelings* of the forgiven have undergone a striking change in many, and essential respects. Ah, how painful to a believer is the insensibility of the unconcerned sinner. His indifference to divine things, is enough to amaze angels and confound demons. Of all subjects pressed upon his attention, none other awakens so little interest, as does that of religion. But when the Spirit arrests his attention, his feelings *begin* to undergo a remarkable change. Truth is heard by him with candor, and remembered with interest. By day and by night his thoughts are employed about divine things. Every work of God appears to have a voice, which calls to repentance. Sometimes the anxiety of the convicted becomes so great, that sleep departs from his eyes, health fails, and the grave seems just at hand. A violated law, an insulted God, and a slighted Saviour, appear in awful nearness; misimproved Sabbaths and frequently despised strivings of the Spirit rush upon his recollection, and overwhelm him with indescribable sorrow. In mournful soliloquy, he exclaims, I am an abuser of grace, a

bold transgressor, an heir of hell, and am *hastening* to the abode of the lost. O that I might find mercy! What would I not do, to secure deliverance from this oppressive load of my guilt? I am undone! "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" And now, that tender call of Christ salutes his ear: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." His drooping head is raised. Can this, he asks, be intended for me? May I go to Jesus, and find peace? While meditating, another charming assurance falls upon his hearing, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." He pauses amid joyful astonishment, reflects, inquires, is encouraged, and resolves that he will go to Jesus. The resolution is carried into execution. *He goes to Jesus*; falls down in the divine presence; and weeping bitterly, on account of sin, he says, I have sinned against reason; I have sinned against revelation; I have sinned most foolishly, and wilfully; I am justly condemned by God; I condemn myself. Jesus beholds the penitent, and declares, in words of unlimited compassion, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." *That* inexpressible anguish of soul gives place to joy unspeakably great, and full of glory. Guilt is forgiven; transgressions are blotted out.

O the happiness of the newly forgiven! "He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." Upward will I lift up mine eyes. Yonder on a throne of glory sits my Father. For years I hated him with all my heart; but now he is my soul's delight. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Christ, who had appeared as a root out of a dry ground, and as having no form or comeliness, why he should be desired, now seems to him altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousands. With a settled purpose he says, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest."

The feelings of the forgiven are changed as respects this world. Its brightest colors are dim; its highest enjoyments

unworthy of pursuit, and its warmest friendships to be avoided rather than sought. The visible works of God shine in a new light, and the Bible has become a precious book, for which no price would be an equivalent. Pious persons, whose presence was formerly shunned, are now the company sought ; yea, the saints are esteemed the excellent of the earth, by him just pardoned. "Let the righteous smite me. It shall be a kindness." Changed too are the feelings in regard to seasons and places of worship. The forgiven sinner is at once interested in what the Redeemer loves and requires. To offer praise and to join in prayer are delightful exercises. The closet, the family altar, and the sanctuary, have irresistible attractions. As soon will a living creature be found which has no desire for food, as a pardoned transgressor who has no relish for public and private worship. Not less marked is the change of feeling in respect to the great object of life ; once it was self, now it is the glory of God.

3. The future *prospects* of a sinner on being forgiven, are at once greatly changed. While impenitent, he was under the wrath and condemnation of his Maker ; but on being forgiven, he is delivered from both. Each moment bears all the unpardoned onward to that awful gulf of ruin, into which many have been banished. "Surely thou didst set them in slippery places ; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment." But the pardoned are placed upon a rock ; their goings are established, and their course is heavenward. Strangers and pilgrims on earth, they journey toward the eternal city. *Earthly* prospects do not necessarily brighten, when one becomes a child of God ; but those relating to eternity are clothed with celestial attractions. When once the word has gone forth from the lips of the Redeemer, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," the individual thus addressed will never more be unforgiven. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him



that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Every one dying unpardoned, has before him the certainty of lying down in that sorrow, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The forgiven are sure to dwell eternally at the right hand of God, where "there is fulness of joy," and "pleasures forevermore." On leaving time these will be admitted into the spotless society of angels, and of all those holy beings, who may have been gathered from the numberless worlds which God has created and peopled with sinless creatures, to illustrate his glory. The gliding periods of eternity will effect no change in the condition of the forgiven, which can interrupt or check their bliss. We suppose that their capacity for enjoyment will continue to increase, and that their enlarged and ever enlarging capacity will always be filled. An apostle alludes to the matter thus : "Beloved, now are we the sons of God ; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3 : 2.

"They see their Saviour face to face,  
And sing the triumphs of his grace."

I must not dismiss this subject, without proposing a few inquiries to my readers.

Are you forgiven ? But two classes of persons are found on probation ; one consists of the forgiven, and the other of those yet remaining under the wrath of God. On which side of this dividing line do you stand ? Who should be ignorant on this point of momentous concern ? Is it not possible to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion ? Surely it is manifest respecting some classes, that *they* are not forgiven. Pharisees have not been forgiven ; hypocrites have not been forgiven ; openly irreligious persons have not been forgiven ; secret opposers of truth have not been forgiven ; sceptics have not been



forgiven ; none who intelligently reject the essential doctrines of religion, have been forgiven. It is obvious that no one who has not *sought* forgiveness has been forgiven. Sins of life and sins of heart, sins of thought and sins of word ; yea, all sins must be renounced, before God the Son can pronounce one forgiven. Make careful search, and if you are forgiven, some evidence of it will appear. Suppose you are confident that you are still in an unpardoned state ; then, let me ask, do you desire forgiveness ? If correct views have been presented in the preceding paragraphs, to be in the condition of the forgiven is certainly desirable, whether you are anxious for it or not. Heaven is no less glorious as a place, because some desire none of its excellence, than it would be if all were eager for it. It is important for you that all your sins be taken away, for if they are not, you must feel, to the full extent of your susceptibility of suffering, the awful penalty due to transgressors. Pardon for sin is not granted to those who do not desire it. It is morally impossible for God to declare one forgiven, who loves iniquity with all the heart. Moreover, absolution from sin must be desired, not merely that deserved wrath be escaped, but chiefly that the favor of God may be enjoyed ; that time and eternity may be spent in conformity to holy requirements. Once more I interrogate my readers : Are you seeking forgiveness ? It must be sought earnestly and perseveringly, and on this side of the grave, or the blessing will never be yours. To cry for pardon from the gloomy cells of despair will be in vain. Forgiven or unforgiven, is every man at death ; and forgiven or unforgiven will every man remain forever.

## THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

This language is employed to designate a specific sin, and its use is based on a statement of Christ, which, in substance,

is recorded by three evangelists. "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him ; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Matt. 12 : 31, 32. Mark and Luke both convey the same sentiment, in phraseology slightly varied. There are also a few passages in the epistles which speak of a sin admitting of no forgiveness. See Heb. 6 : 4—6, also 10 : 26—29, and 1 John 5 : 16. In respect, however, to these latter passages, interpreters do not agree in regard to their purport.

What constitutes the sin against the Holy Ghost? This question is answered in different ways by expositors. One class supposes it to have been committed by the scribes and Pharisees on the occasion when our Saviour uttered the language above quoted. "This sin," says a writer in the Cottage Bible, "is charged only upon the scribes and Pharisees, the most enlightened classes of the Jews, many of whom, we have reason to believe, were, in their own minds, satisfied of the truth of Christ's miracles, and of the purity of his moral character ; but their pride and malice would not allow them to acknowledge a Saviour in form and appearance so humble and unpretending, and who, indeed, was opposed to all their plans of aggrandizement and worldly power." The opinion of Tillotson, as stated by Doddridge, was, that "the Pharisees committed this sin, in ascribing the miracles of Christ to Satan." "To speak against the Holy Ghost," Saurin observes, "was maliciously to reject a doctrine, when he who delivered it confirmed the truth of it by so distinguished and evident a miracle as healing a demoniac ; and to ascribe those miracles to the devils, which, they were assured, had God alone for their author." This last writer likewise gives a paraphrase from Chrysostom, on the passage

in Matthew quoted at the head of this article. "You have called me a deceiver and an enemy of God; I forgive this reproach. Having some cause to stumble at the flesh with which I am clothed, you might not know who I am. But can you be ignorant that the casting out of demons is the work of the Holy Ghost? For this cause, he who says that I do these miracles by Beelzebub, shall not obtain remission." A preference is given in Robinson's Calmet to the opinion of Athanasius. "He thinks this sin was chargeable on the Pharisees, because they *maliciously* imputed the works of Christ to the power of the devil, though they could not but be convinced in their own minds, that they were effected by a good spirit. This also involved a denial of the divinity of the Son, which was clearly proved by his works,—works performed by the divine power of the Holy Spirit." Bloomfield supposes that the Pharisees committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, since on them was chargeable "the greatest and most wilful obstinacy in wrong that can be imagined." To the foregoing may perhaps be added the testimony of the evangelist Mark. He affirms, that our Saviour made the statement respecting the sin specified, because the Pharisees said, "He hath an unclean spirit." Does it not then appear that Christ addressed himself to the Pharisees? Still, is it not possible, that having reasoned with those revilers of his miracles, showing them the utter absurdity of the suggestion, that devils might be cast out by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, he expressed himself not specifically to them, but to all? Is it absolutely certain that the Pharisees had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, on the supposition that Christ addressed himself to them in particular? May they not have gone to the very brink of a precipice, without having taken the fatal step? I would not affirm that they had not committed the sin named; I only intimate the possibility that they had not. On the supposition that Christ had primary reference to the Pharisees, we ought

not to suppose that they alone were capable of committing the sin. I could not agree with those interpreters who limit its commission to the time of the Saviour. But it should be observed, that all the writers whose opinions I have cited, do not thus confine it.

Let us now notice another class of expositors. These refer to the special displays of the Holy Spirit, as on the day of Pentecost. Of them is Dr. Scott. I will quote his own language:—“The Pharisees had spoken most blasphemous words against Christ and his miracles, which were, indeed, wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, but not under the immediate inspiration of the Spirit. They had gone as far in impiety as they could, without finally excluding themselves from forgiveness. They had spoken blasphemy against the Son of God, and ascribed his miracles to the power of the devil; still they might be pardoned, and one further method would be used to convince them.” He alludes to the pouring out of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and adds, “whosoever, therefore, should blaspheme this last and most complete attestation to Jesus as the promised Messiah, and from determined enmity to him and his kingdom, deliberately ascribe the operations of the Holy Spirit to Satan, that man would be given up to final obduracy and impenitency, and thus never be pardoned, but sink into final perdition. None, therefore, could commit this sin, who did not witness the effects of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the apostles.” Henry and Doddridge both present a similar view. The reasoning of Dr. Scott seems to me *unnatural*. What did the Pharisees know about the coming dispensation of the Spirit? Besides, was not the Spirit given to Christ without measure? In what respect can the crime of the Pharisees, in attributing the miracles of Jesus to Satan, be considered less than the sin of those who might oppose the work of the Spirit, after his ascension? In a word, why might not the Holy Ghost be blasphemed



during the mission of our Saviour as easily as after his departure?

There is yet another class of interpreters ; but these do not, like the preceding, *locate* the sin. Its essence, in their estimation, is substantially the same with that which the preceding classes attribute to it. They do not suppose it necessary to have lived either when Christ was upon earth, or at the day of Pentecost, in order to fall into it. Dr. Adam Clarke's definition of the sin against the Holy Ghost is in the following words : " When the person obstinately attributed those works to the devil which he had the fullest evidence could be wrought only by the Spirit of God." Dr. Emmons says, " It is a sin of the *tongue* ; a public, not a private sin. It cannot be committed without knowledge of a certain kind. Great attainments in human learning are not necessary, nor great illuminations ; but the knowledge of the Holy Spirit, and his peculiar operations is necessary. It cannot be committed ignorantly."

Leaving now the various, and rather conflicting opinions of expositors, let us endeavor to form one of our own, if indeed it be possible for us so to do. Perhaps the subject is, with design, stated obscurely in the Scriptures, in order that every one may fear, lest he shall be left to commit this sin, and that no one shall be accused by a fellow-creature of having committed it. Are we not safe in adopting this definition ? viz. :

The unpardonable sin consists in *malignantly* ascribing to Satan, the *known* operations of the Holy Spirit. Should this be taken as a correct statement, it would be necessary in order to commit the sin, that one should understand what are the operations of the Spirit, and that out of pure *malignity*, and on no other account, he should attribute them to Satan. Such a definition is *unincumbered*. The Pharisees may or may not have committed the sin ; revilers on the day of Pentecost may or may not have been guilty of it. It may have been



committed by many in every age since Christ, or by only a few, or by none.

Though the question, what is the unpardonable sin, be one respecting which there is a variety of opinions, and though the subject involved in it be somewhat of a speculative character, yet it also has a practical bearing. "Scarcely any thing in the whole Scripture has given more discouragement to weak Christians."\* The writer recently heard of a man, who, on his death-bed, and for years previous, was troubled greatly with the impression, that he had committed this sin. He was seriously minded; thought much and deeply on the subject of religion. In his case, there was no evidence to others that he had been guilty, as he feared.

I submit the following suggestions:

1. Some persons certainly have not been guilty of committing the unpardonable sin. None are involved in it, who are *sincerely penitent* for all their transgressions. They have not fallen into it *while* in the exercise of penitential feelings; and the present existence of such feelings in their hearts, is evidence that they had not *previously*, for those guilty of that sin are given up to hardness and insensibility. The really penitent always receive pardon. If, therefore, any have so sinned that they cannot be forgiven, they are morally incapable of exercising gospel repentance. Hence, it may be confidently affirmed of all who mourn over sin after a godly sort, and tremble lest they have fallen into the condemnation of him who cannot be forgiven, that they need not thus fear. One eminent divine remarks, that "They who most fear having committed it, are generally at the greatest distance from it." Another says, "Let not the humble soul, that trembles at God's word, meditate terror to itself from such a passage."

---

\* Dr. Scott.

A third speaks thus, concerning this point, "Those who fear that they have committed this sin, give good sign that they have not."

2. There is danger of committing the unpardonable sin. According to the definition which I have given, it can be committed in any age ; and there have been instances in modern times of individuals who exhibited manifest tokens of being utterly abandoned of the Spirit.

Did the earth ever sustain on its bosom, more hardened haters of the Holy Spirit, than at the present time ? Would not even the Pharisees *blush* to witness the wickedness now prevalent ? Could they have spoken more blasphemously against the Spirit of God, than he is spoken against at this day ? Did they join to slay the Redeemer ? Ah, were it possible, he would be crucified a thousand times in less than twenty-four hours. Multitudes are in every place, crying, "Crucify him, crucify him," and the chiefs of the people are ready to give him up. Guilt in rejecting truth bears a proportion to the means of light and knowledge enjoyed. Have not we an authentic record of the miracles of Christ, and of the wonders wrought by the Holy Spirit in the early days of his dispensation ? And have we not also the corroborating testimony of eighteen hundred years ? Are not sinners now in special danger of committing the unpardonable sin ?

3. As we do not know for certainty, respecting any individuals, that they have committed this sin, it is our duty to pray for *all*, and to call upon them to repent and turn to God. There have been cases, in which apparently the most hardened in sin, were made the subjects of special grace. We may *hope* that none about us are beyond the reach of mercy, while we cannot but indulge the *fear* that some are. Surely, the Lord will not be offended at our efforts to save even the most sinful, if he do not impart to us evidence of their being beyond the possibility of pardon. It may not be improper to suggest,

that all sin, if not forgiven, will sooner or later become unpardonable. There is no forgiveness for those who die enemies to God. Such are reserved, with the angels who kept not their first estate, for an awful exhibition at the judgment of the great day, and for an endless existence amid the scenes, the sorrows, the anguish and despair of a miserable eternity. Let each thoughtless sinner reflect, and forsake his wickedness, lest sudden destruction come upon him.

The question naturally arises — *Why* is the sin, here considered, unpardonable? For a definite and full answer, we shall doubtless be compelled to wait till the books of the last day are opened, and the reasons for God's various dealings with man are proclaimed to the universe. It is now one of those "secret things" which "belong unto the Lord our God." Perhaps the sin against the Holy Ghost approximates indefinitely near to that committed by the angels who fell. *They* must have been perfectly satisfied of the righteousness of the claims, which the Eternal had, upon their love and obedience; and in order to the commission of *the unpardonable sin*, one must be fully convinced that the operations which he attributes to satanic influence, are effects of the Holy Ghost's agency. Is it not enough for us to know that the specified sin cannot be forgiven? Should we attempt to open a book, the contents of which not even the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath authority to reveal to us while we are in time?

#### SANCTIFICATION.

Commonly the term *sanctification* is used to designate those transforming operations, by which the polluted subjects of sin are prepared for the purity of heaven. It "is a work of God's Spirit, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." Though it naturally includes

regeneration; yet the word is often employed to embrace only what occurs *after that event*. Much has been written respecting this subject; more, however, probably, that is decidedly erroneous, than according to truth.\* The moral condition implied in a state of complete sanctification, is the most desirable conceivable; to those in it, is guaranteed every good of which renewed sinners are capable in eternity. We must become spiritually pure, in order to be perfectly happy. "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Entire freedom from sin, secures completeness in blessedness. The happiness of Jehovah would be immediately interrupted, should the least moral impurity become attached to his character. Sanctification therefore, is just as desirable as are heaven and its joys. One begins to be made holy at the precise time in which the heart is renewed by the Spirit. Regeneration is

---

\* A few thoughts on Christian *perfection*. 1. God, as a moral Governor, can, under no circumstances whatever, require less of moral beings, than perfection in holiness. 2. As a righteous Ruler, he must originally have so capacitated his accountable creatures that they could comply with his laws. 3. If any of them are in a fallen state, they may be consequently incapacitated to keep his laws perfectly. 4. Mankind are in a fallen condition. 5. As intimated under the first head, the requirements of God respecting the human race cannot have varied from what they would be, had the race remained in original rectitude. The divine law is every where the rule of moral conduct. Even devils are bound by its enactments. 6. Hence no inference indicating that *we* are capable of Christian perfection can be legitimately drawn from the demands of the moral law; these are necessarily immutable. No more was required of Adam unfallen, than of him fallen; no more of holy angels than of apostate spirits. 7. Mankind are morally incapacitated to obey perfectly the law of God. 8. The way of life through Christ does not insure perfection to any this side of heaven. 9. It does guarantee perfection, as a future good, to all true penitents; for it insures them a home with the holy. 10. True believers will not regard themselves as perfect. 11. All such, however, will desire perfection, and aim to attain it. 12. Those who reach in time the highest degree of sanctification, will not boast of their attainments, but will loathe themselves on account of their sins, and daily strive to grow in grace.



sanctification commenced. Our moral nature is wholly defiled till we are born again. The new birth originates a new life ; but as that change, though *radical*, is not entire, it is correctly designated the beginning of sanctification. An infant has begun to be what it will have become, when all its powers are fully developed. So he that has received the renewing grace of God, is incipiently a saint. In the former case, we style the change undergone, from infancy to maturity, growth ; in the latter, degrees of sanctification ; also, not inappropriately, it is designated advances in the divine life. From the helpless infant, arises the man of full stature ; and from the spiritual child, is formed the spotless occupant of a celestial mansion.

That sanctification is progressive, appears from the experience of believers ; also from the Scriptures ; perhaps I should add, from observation. A young convert may exhibit greater enthusiasm in sacred things, than does his elder in the Christian career ; yet the first is sanctified less than the other. Mere *ardor* is not holiness. Piety ought to possess much zeal ; but zeal apparently for religion, is not necessarily always religious. The farther individuals are advanced in the divine life, the clearer are their views of sin. Paul had long served God, when he wrote thus of himself : “ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? ” Let those, who *must do it*, confide in the cold theories concerning the apostle's object in the chapter from which the foregoing selection is made. His statements there, concerning himself, are verified by the experience of every devoted Christian, who has for years walked humbly with God. Young converts do not at once find themselves in the state he so emphatically described.



"The new-born child of gospel grace,  
Like some fair tree, when summer's nigh,  
Beneath Emanuel's shining face,  
Lifts up his blooming branch on high.

"No fears he feels—he sees no foes,  
No conflict yet his faith employs;  
Nor has he learned to whom he owes  
The strength and peace his soul enjoys."

Not many years however pass, ere the youthful believer ascertains that he must fight or die; he cannot be carried on "flowery beds."

A healthful child, with proper treatment, increases in size and strength daily; yet not even the eye of its mother can discover on any particular day the growth during the current twenty-four hours. Faithful followers of the Lamb may seem to themselves to be making a retrograde movement, and yet they are gradually fitting for heaven. They bear a nearer resemblance to their divine Master now, than they did a month or a week since. To them this statement may seem incorrect; their Saviour knows it to be true.

From the nature of the case, sanctification must be progressive in all those instances, in which the renewed are continued for a season on earth, subsequent to their renewal. They become heirs of life eternal, when the saving change occurs; but it is immediately and continually evident, that they are not wholly purified from their sins; hence the work of preparation for heaven must be progressive, or it will never be completed. It is, however, the purpose of God, that at length it shall be completed. "He, which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

*The great Agent in it.*

The Holy Spirit sanctifies. No less is his agency demanded in the progress than in the commencement of the work by

which inhabitants are fitted for heaven out of the impure people of earth. In every stage of the transition from sin to holiness, up to the time of entering into rest, the believer must say, "By the grace of God, I am what I am." Apostles were inspired to give correct instruction on this subject, not less than on others deemed, by the Most High, essential. "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Christ purchased, by his death, the influences of the Spirit to abide with all who believe in him. They cannot be left by this holy Agent, for he is pledged to continue with them and to aid them. The grace of Christ is always thus sufficient and near. That eternal purpose of mercy toward them, made manifest in their regeneration, secures the complete redemption of their souls and bodies. Having commenced doing for his elect, God will not abandon them, but bring them to his kingdom of glory.

*Means necessary.*

While it is the Spirit's prerogative to sanctify, means must be used to promote sanctification. God is the preserver of life and the author of health; yet who expects to be strong, or even to remain a month on earth, without the employment of appropriate means? We cannot become fitted for heaven by inactivity. "Gracious affections, both in the commencement and progress, are exercised in view of truth." A regenerate soul can no more be strengthened in righteousness and ripened for immortality, if it be not nourished, than can a human body increase in stature and be fit for service, without a regular and sufficient supply of nutritious food. Suitable exercise, in a salubrious moral atmosphere, is also absolutely essential to the spiritual believer. "Sanctify them through thy truth," was a

petition of Christ. Fidelity in studying the Scriptures is an important means of sanctification. In vain shall we look for a Christian, growing in grace, who neglects the Bible. In that volume are the wells of salvation and the heavenly manna. From the Bible we learn what we ought to do and from what we should refrain; it teaches us how the Spirit may be cherished, and in what ways he will be grieved. All the divinely appointed means of grace must receive careful and constant attention, or the work of sanctification cannot progress as it will if they be properly employed. The king of Zion has made no superfluous appointments for his subjects; there are no idle ceremonies of his authorizing; his church, as constituted by him, is pure from whatever is not essential to its prosperity. Strict conformity to the laws of the Redeemer's kingdom, insures happiness now, and a perpetuity of it in unsullied holiness forever. Faithful servants of the Saviour have reason to say, "We all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory." "We know, that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

*Evidences of Sanctification.*

Evidence that we are the recipients of sanctifying grace is of the same nature with that which convinces us that we are born again. Proof of the heart's renewal is likewise proof of our having begun to be made holy. How can it be evinced that the heavenly birth is ours? "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Is it possible, that so great a change as this declaration implies, can be experienced and not be perceivable? I refer not to the exact moment of its occurrence; but will it not manifest itself sooner or later? May we not as well suppose that a child can be added to the world's population and continue to fill a place in its scenes for years, without

itself or any one knowing of its existence, as that a person can be translated out of the kingdom of darkness into gospel light — be released from the bondage of Satan, and be made a freeman of the Lord, and the event be incapable of human proof? Such, certainly, is not the view presented by the Scriptures. They tell us, that the works of the flesh, that is, of the unrenewed state, are manifest, and they also give us quite a catalogue of these unholy developments. In marked contrast, and in close connection with sin's deeds, are named, the fruits of the Spirit; which are, "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." After the enumeration of the two classes,—the first, denominated works of the flesh, the second, fruits of the Spirit,—we read, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

The more sanctification progresses in an individual, the clearer are his views of sin, the greater is his sense of its ill-desert, and his desires after holiness are correspondingly increased. High spiritual attainments are secured by unaffected humility, distrust of self, and perseverance in sacred duties. All claims to the Christian's hope are forfeited, where there is a relinquishment of the duties enjoined by the gospel. If we love Christ, his ordinances will be precious unto us. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." An idea more abused could not be embraced, than is that divulged by certain advocates of sinless perfection. Claiming to be pure as the Saviour himself, they set at naught the Sabbath, the sanctuary, baptism and the communion table; they have no closet; no family altar; and refuse to join in social prayer. We can conceive of none among the probationers of the human race, who give more decided evidence of



being *reprobates*. If such be perfect, theirs must be a perfection in wickedness, for they resemble devils distinctly, but Jesus Christ not in the least ; they are fit for hell ; heaven can be no home for them.

When is the precise moment of the completion of sanctification ? A definite answer is not within our power. Two points, however, we may believe are settled ; and, first, saints are made entirely holy before they are admitted into heaven ; but, secondly, they are not free from sin a short time previous to their reception into the abode of the sinless. So much appears obvious ; can more be stated with precision ? Our times are in the hands of God, and so is the work of fitting us for the joys of his holy kingdom. Whom he effectually calls, he justifies and glorifies. He that is born of the Holy Spirit, is never forsaken by that omnipotent Agent. The soul, lifted from the prison of sin, is eventually elevated to the skies. A purpose to regenerate, embraces the bringing to heaven of the renewed, and what the Lord has purposed, that will he perform. In the day when his jewels are made up, shall appear in divine beauty all that were spiritually born.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

Hope is rather a passion than a principle. Its influence is extensive and powerful. Who is not affected by it ? In what breast does it not dwell ? A little reflection will convince any one, that he is very much controlled by it. This it is which cheers the adventurer as he departs in search of discovery, or conquest, or gain. Like a star, it shines upon the path of the bewildered and the wandering, pointing them to a home still dear, and kindred yet alive. Behold the weepers in the chamber of sickness ; they gather with flowing tears about the bed of their suffering and perhaps dying friend ; but while there is breath, hope lingers, nor will it depart till the failing



pulse has beat its own farewell. Seldom, truly, is there seen, on earth, an instance of absolute despair. To witness frequent specimens of that terrific state of the human mind, we must descend to a world, from which an immutable decree excludes every solace.

“Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes.”

In the present article, the writer's design is to present a few thoughts respecting the Christian's hope. Those indulging it, know well the import of the phrase; but such as do not possess it, are not in a state to appreciate its preciousness. It has different degrees of vividness, but, in all cases, the possessor is looking heavenward; is anticipating an entrance hereafter into the joys of God's eternal kingdom. More is embraced by it than simply one's own salvation. To define hope briefly, would be scarcely more than substituting other terms, perhaps less definite, for the one, the meaning of which the object is to illustrate. The hope of the Christian — what is it? Just what the name naturally suggests; a hope peculiar to him, who belongs by faith to Christ. Believers may be influenced by a thousand hopes, but this one is set above like the sun in the heavens, and of it we may affirm,

1. It is well supported. On the Son of God it rests. His atoning merits are the basis upon which it stands, and it must be immovable, for they are unchangeable. The Rock of Ages is Christ declared to be. No other foundation can be laid, nor can this cease to be sure and ample. Here all believers have built their hopes of eternal life, and none of them have ever been disappointed in so doing. The divine promises centre in him; hence the hope that has Christ for its foundation is encouraged and strengthened by these. God, manifest in the flesh, is he that was crucified as the Lamb of divine appointment, and therefore the hope which rests on him is sustained

by the triune Jehovah, who, in three persons, is the one God of salvation, interposing by the cross. Furthermore, this hope results from the renewing and sanctifying agency of the Holy Spirit, whose influences were purchased for ruined man by the sacrificial death on Calvary. No unrenewed person can indulge it; morally, he is utterly incapacitated to receive it, while he remains in a state of nature.

Religious hopes there are in vast variety. Few are the persons who are destitute of one; yet only a single class of them is founded on Christ, or is sustained by the promises of God, or is the fruit of regeneration. We might take up, and inspect any one of the numerous hopes indulged by the errorist or the deceived, and not an example could be found among either, which is entitled to the least respect. Each is palpably unscriptural, impious, and destined to perish. The hope of the hypocrite shall be cut off, and his trust be as the spider's web, yet his profession is not more without support, than is that of the formalist, or of the heretic. Men, who devoutly bow to idol shrines, and expect to reap eternal exemption from sorrow, as the natural harvest of the seed which they now scatter, are not doomed to more certain disappointment, than are those on whom the gospel shines, yet who make to themselves hopes of future blessedness, contrary to its revelations. "The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost." Many are the preliminary exercises of mind, which must be experienced before a hope *known* to be well founded can be cherished by any person. I say *known*; this may be too strong a term. Not every one entitled to a cheering hope of heaven is confident of being in the way thither. By faith, rather than assurance, even the saints walk. Only here and there a disciple dares to assert himself sure that his name is in the book of life. It should never be considered as the great end of conviction to acquire a hope. Far too much stress is often laid upon the getting of a hope.

Individuals are fond enough of its comfort. To the *contrite*, salvation is sure, though they live in despair. No man is elevated to heaven, because he confidently expects to be saved. All about us are seen persons anticipating life eternal, who can show no good foundation for their hopes. Never should we be zealous to inspire any persons with the confidence that their souls are free from danger. Safe indeed they are if penitent, for all such God adopts into his family. Our heavenly Father will not withhold needful tokens of his favor from the humble. Strive to show sinners their guilt, danger, and remedy, and let a hope in every case be the gift of the Omniscient Lord; then, if granted at all, it will be sure and steadfast, passing "within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." Such a hope, no trials with the heart or in the world can destroy, though its lustre be for a time lessened.

2. It is a comforting hope. But in this respect it *seems* not always so distinctively marked, as it really is. False hopes appear, at times, to cheer those holding them. Haters of holiness have now and then died with professed exultations in the prospect of realizing as true, that which they have held as the faith once delivered to the saints, yet what the Scriptures assert to be error. Now, however much their hopes animate them, it is evidently delusion, not reality, which throws a mock halo around such dying scenes. Whatever in religion is susceptible of being imitated, has been by that being whose highest zeal is exerted in attempts to counterfeit the fruits of the Spirit. False hopes are his most highly prized products. To see human creatures clapping their hands for joy, as the night of life is shutting upon them, when he knows that in a few moments they will begin to be eternally miserable, affords him the greatest pleasure. Let it therefore never be affirmed, that a hope is proved good, simply upon the testimony of the dying.

Were the regenerate made perfectly holy at the time of their renewal, they could hardly need the help of a hope. Being conscious of freedom from all sin, assurance of acceptance with God would immediately begin, and abide. An eternal home with him must be theirs beyond a doubt. None are, however, perfect then, or at any time subsequently while on probation. The purest of the pious are conscious of such degrees of impurity, as to make them feel often wholly sinful. It seems to them as if the light shining within, only reveals their immeasurable iniquity. How can those so much defiled be the children of the Most High? This to them is a serious and very practical question. Every duty attempted has been imperfectly performed; faith always feeble, sometimes wavering, fails to see heaven open; then it is that hope, like an angel from above, affords its timely assistance, and saves from despair the disconsolate believer.

“ Amidst temptations, sharp and long,  
My soul to this dear refuge flies;  
Hope is my anchor, firm and strong,  
While tempests blow, and billows rise.”

An eminent writer has said, “Matters will more or less hang dubiously with us all, in this reign of mortality.” If we do not doubt the divine ability to save, or that the regenerate will be brought home to heaven, yet our hearts may frequently be distressed, lest sanctification have never begun in us. I speak, of course, respecting the prayerful only. The humblest believer fears much that he has not known, savingly, Jesus Christ.

“ When I turn my eyes within,  
All is dark, and vain, and wild;  
Filled with unbelief and sin,  
Can I deem myself a child? ”

Numerous, overwhelming, and perhaps it may be said, mysterious, are the trials, which at times come upon the Christian.



"All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Sorrow is often his companion, and he is led to think Jehovah is his enemy. Darkness shuts him in on every side, and over him blackness itself is centred; but lo, a star pierces through the gloom, and a voice, as if borne on its brightness, says to the desponding saint, "Hope thou in God." Inspired with new courage, this child of the skies rejoicingly exclaims, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." Thus as the vessel is saved from ruin, by its well made and firmly grasping anchor, so is the Christian held from despair by hope; nor shall it ever fail, for it is fastened to the throne of God. The Father of lights is not now less merciful, this kind influence whispers, though he seem to have forgotten his own graciousness, than when with infinite benignity he smiles upon the soul.

"Whate'er my fears, or foes suggest,  
Thou art my hope, my joy, my rest;  
My heart shall feel thy love, and raise  
My cheerful voice to songs of praise."

Though the Christian's hope have special reference to his own personal interest in the Saviour, it is not wholly disconnected with others' spiritual well-being. The child of God is not alone in pursuit of the crown of life. He belongs to the household of faith, and his mind is necessarily occupied much in the general concerns of the church; her sorrows are his, and they fill him with bitterness. By her condition, his faith is frequently tried. Adverse winds blow upon the city of the great King; hosts encamp against it; hell's fires seem almost ready to melt its walls, and the elect of the Lord tremble. Still, in the most dreadful hour, there is hope that present terror will pass away. The promises are plain, that eventually there will be an overthrow of all opposition, and that com-



plete victory shall be granted to Zion. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God; the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early." Hope, always pointing to the promises, lifts up the saint's drooping head; she fails not to comfort, when all else in the mind has lost the power of dispelling doubt. Ages yet future shall witness the passing away of the clouds so often dimming the prospects of the truth.

Amid the sorrows attendant upon a pilgrimage in the narrow way of life, whatever be their specific character, hope imparts pleasing aid. Its voice is smooth as the notes of the sweetest music; without flattery it speaks encouragingly; never deceiving, it is ever smiling. Blessed boon from heaven; worth more than all earthly treasures is it to him, that has a right to its comforting friendship. Let it gild the path we tread with its light, and ever cheer us in our sojourning, till we reach the place of cherubim and seraphim.

3. It is a purifying hope. To this affirmation inspiration guides us. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself." The believer is, according to this statement, continually engaged in efforts to be freed from sin, for scriptural purity is nothing more or less than such deliverance. Action, present and continuous, has this end in view. While life remaineth, the purifying process is diligently carried forward by each follower of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is that divine Agent who fits men for heaven; he, however, works in them in such a way, that they work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. Where his power is employed, human agency is invariably called into exercise. In other words, every individual to whom the Spirit gives a new heart and a good hope, is striving to overcome sin. One may have been engaged in the warfare fifty years; yet will it never cease to be true in

time that he is thus exerting himself ; while he remains on earth, the warfare must proceed.

“Thy arduous work will not be done,  
Till thou obtain thy crown.”

Persons regarding themselves as sinless, should be considered as “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.” It is a distinctive mark of Christ’s disciples, that they are habitually engaged in purifying themselves. No thought can be more distant from the humble Christian, than that he has no sin. The fact is stated in the Bible, (that all having the good hope, are aiming continually to resemble their holy Master,) not for the purpose of eliciting debate, but as one of great importance, and never to be held in doubt. It cannot be otherwise, than that perfect freedom from sin is the earnest desire of those who have been made partakers of saving grace. Satisfaction with present attainments in holiness is impossible ; such desire to be like Christ, but they find themselves immeasurably below their standard. Complete preparation for heaven is the mark at which they aim, yet so distant does it seem, that no moment should be lost in efforts to gain it. Ah how little purity, and what an amount of impurity, does the light of truth exhibit, in the soul begun to be cleansed !

“My God, I cry with every breath,  
For some kind power to save ;  
To break the yoke of sin and death,  
And thus redeem the slave.”

The zeal for purity inspired by the Christian hope, looks to a complete redemption from all doctrines hostile to those revealed by God. Have they been harbored ; now they are abhorred ; but having been deep rooted, their entire removal is difficult. Some of the renewed must long struggle,

in order to put away what they had formerly cherished. Habits too, indulged for years, and almost inveterate, must be broken up, when one becomes a new creature in Christ. These pertain to modes of thinking, speaking and acting. Girding on the divine panoply, the soldier of the cross resists every thing of this nature. "Be not conformed to this world," is a daily practical maxim with such as hope on substantial grounds. Correcting what has been outwardly wrong is important, and will by no means be omitted. If, however, all that is purely theoretical and external be right, within, as has been above stated, is a fountain of evil. Over this, the believer has constant reason to weep and to pray without ceasing, that he may become pure as is Christ the Lord. But I must close these hints, and in so doing, add, that it is a lively hope which the believer possesses. Heavenly is a term which designates well its nature. From above it came ; not less than faith is it the gift of God. He, by his Spirit, gives the good hope of being some time, and forever, with the Redeemer. Upwards it sweetly lifts the soul, when dreariness reigns around ; thither, too, it points her when earth seems too winning. Myriads of allurements cannot enchain those, who possess the animating hope anchored within the veil. They desire, most earnestly, a fitness to be with and like Jesus, even though every thing below is as attractive to them as the curse can permit.

## GRIEVING THE SPIRIT.

In the great scheme of salvation, the united agencies of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are employed. The latter, though not less a distinct person in the Godhead than either of the others, is not unfrequently represented as an influence. Nor is there any inconsistency in the two-fold presentation of his operation, for his *office* in the economy of grace, is subordi-

nate to those of the other persons in the Trinity, while in nature, he is one with them.

*Ways in which the Spirit may be grieved.*

We grieve the Spirit, when we indulge unholy feelings, whether they be simply cherished, or developed in outward acts. His nature is pure, and can have no complacency in evil thinking and acting. "Be ye angry and sin not ; let not the sun go down upon your wrath ; neither give place to the devil." This divine Agent has multiplied maxims, by which our hearts and lives may be so regulated, as not to incur the condemnation of those who vex him, and he has aimed his cautions not less at the affections, than at the external deportment. What to him are mere outward actings ?

The Spirit is grieved if his operations are undervalued. It is a doctrine of the Bible, that we are dependent on him for conviction, regeneration, and sanctification. No intelligent Christian will question the correctness of this statement ; yet a true believer cannot be found, who is not liable to think less highly than he ought of what the Holy Ghost did for him, in making him a new creature, and what the same Being is daily doing, to prepare him for the society of the perfect. Certainly there is danger that God's own children will not uniformly feel their need of the Spirit's presence with them. All genuine revivals of religion are begun, and caused to progress, by divine efficiency. Excitements there may be, and numerous nominal conversions, without the agency of the Spirit ; but man is not benefited, nor is the Lord honored by such phenomena. All thus reckoned among believers will soon fall, not from grace, but from the height to which a species of mental intoxication has elevated them. Whenever the people of God forget that themselves are momentarily dependent on the Spirit for their growth in holiness, and that hope for

sinner can be based only on his merciful presence, then do they grieve him. Polytheistic superstitions can be destroyed, and the deluded slaves of idolatrous rites be brought to worship the true Jehovah, by nothing except the omnipotent power of the Holy Ghost.

“ Who but thou, Almighty Spirit,  
Can the heathen world reclaim ?  
Men may preach, but till thou favor,  
Pagans will be still the same.”

If the means appointed by infinite Wisdom, to secure his saving influences, be not suitably esteemed, the Spirit is grieved. These are the channels through which he ordinarily comes to the hearts and souls of men. His visits are merciful, and he rejoices to bless all whom he finds waiting for him in the way divinely appointed. Many are left in sin, who, had they placed themselves in the sphere of his special operations, would have been saved. Inspiration has declared it to be the pleasure of God that the wicked turn from his course of transgressions, and live ; hence we may regard the Spirit as grieved when individuals persist in treading the broad way of death. It is he who cries unto them, “ Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.” Moreover, he exhorts and commands believers to grow in grace ; yet they never can thus progress while neglectful of those means which promote holy attainments. There is but one method by which the renewed can be daily transforming into the image of Christ ; hence, if this be discarded, the Holy Ghost must grieve over the worldliness of those whom he has already formed into sons and daughters of the Lord.

Allied to the way of grieving the Spirit just named, I mention as another, the slighting of his visits, when, in spite of all obstacles, he deigns to transcend, by his compassion, our ill-desert, and to draw near to our souls. How important are such interviews ! Without them saints will sin, and the



impenitent never be raised from their degradation to holiness ; and yet it is perfectly natural to let the calls of the world drown the whispers of the Spirit. Who does not sometimes feel specially impressed with a sense of the value of sacred things ? Suddenly the Spirit comes nigh to the Christian, and bids him pray. If the suggestion be not heeded, it is slighted. Sinners not unfrequently are brought to an abrupt pause in the midst of a high career of madness. At such times the Holy Ghost is by their side, ready to bless if his monitions are regarded, but perhaps not designing to display his sovereignty in subduing those, whose attention he has arrested. It has been said of the Spirit, that "he bestows his richest favors, where they will be most coveted and most prized." Therefore, if we would enjoy his benign presence, "we must take care to maintain a deportment, suited to the character of that divine Agent."

To fellowship religious error is a direct way by which to grieve the Spirit. Essential doctrines stand on record as the result of his inspiration. Why did he move holy men to write, if it were not that all might read, believe, obey, and be blessed ? He communicated nothing to those who were his amanuenses, except what is important for the human family to know. Whatever he has seen fit to dictate, they should cordially receive. Can he be otherwise than grieved, when any, especially those who profess strict conformity to the word, are found conniving at erroneous opinions in matters of faith ? The Holy Ghost has, through the apostles, made very important suggestions on this subject. "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1 : 9. We must carefully search for the truth, and fearlessly defend it. It is necessary to contend earnestly for that system of doctrines which was once delivered to the saints. Not to enter farther into specifications, it may be stated in general, that those who would not grieve the Spirit must cautiously attend to all his instructions ; keeping with great

diligence their hearts ; guarding their lips ; being particular in respect to associates ; frequenting their closets ; availing themselves of the means of grace within their reach ; in a word, endeavoring to do every thing to the glory of God. All who thus exert themselves he will help, and make intercessions for them “with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

*Consequences of grieving the Spirit.*

If we are dependent upon the Holy Ghost for the commencement and the continuance of holy exercises ; if to regenerate and sanctify be his prerogative, then does it become us to guard most zealously against grieving him, for the consequences cannot be otherwise than fearful. On this point we are duly admonished in the Scriptures. “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” Gen. 6 : 3. “But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit ; therefore, he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them.” Isa. 63 : 10. Something like to what is asserted in this last passage, may have occurred in respect to thousands in modern times. It is in place here to quote that terrific passage in 2 Thess. 2 : 11, 12 : “And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie ; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” Heart-rending expressions come to us from those death-bed scenes, where the victims of dissolution appear to have been pointed out in the passage just quoted. “I have grieved his Holy Spirit so often, that he has justly withdrawn his influences from me, and in the room thereof has left me the spirit of impenitence and reprobation, and given me a certain earnest of a fearful inheritance in another life.”\* The following testimony is from a

---

\* Hon. F. Newport.

Venetian, who after having embraced Protestantism, renounced it through fear of the Pope. "I know that God is merciful, but this mercy belongs not to me — to me, who have denied the truth. I have sinned against the Holy Ghost; I already feel the horrors of the damned. My terrors are insupportable! Who will deliver my soul from this body? Who will open for her the caverns of the abyss? Who will chase her into the darkest abodes of hell? I am damned without resource. I consider God no longer as my Father, but as my enemy. I detest him as such. I am impatient to join the curses of the demons in hell, whose pains and horrors I already feel." \* The case of Altamont, as described by Dr. Young, is another shocking instance. After declaring that heaven is lost, he exclaims, "Oh thou blasphemed, yet indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge, if it hide me from thy frown." By recurring to the article on the deaths of infidels, the reader will find further extracts from the sayings of this dying young man.† Accounts not unlike the above are frequently published in the form of tracts. It would be easy to fill pages of this volume with extracts, in which persons — some of them in the morning of life, and others more advanced — have confessed that they were once subjects of divine operations, but having grieved the Spirit, they have been left of him to become utterly hardened in impenitency. There is a sin for which no pardon has been provided: the apostle John styles it "a sin unto death;" and Christ informs us how it is committed. "Who-soever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him; neither in this world, neither in the world to come." Matt. 12: 32. Let those to whom the Spirit whispers, beware how they treat his kind approaches, lest he leave them to go on in sin beyond that line, on the other side of which, mercy is never shown to the guilty.

---

\* See Saurin's 89th Sermon.

† Page 220.

With undoubting confidence does the writer embrace the sentiment, that all who have been born again will hold on their way, till admittance into heaven shall have completed the period of their imperfection. Still the degrees of light reflected by the regenerate are various. The good which believers accomplish, is often far less than it should be. How are their deficiencies to be explained? Evidently the Spirit to whom they are indebted for a disposition and ability to be co-workers with God, is driven from them; not indeed wholly, but so far as to leave them careless and unfruitful in the works of righteousness. "As we are indebted to the Spirit for the first formation of divine life; so it is he who alone can maintain it and render it strong and vigorous." Most injurious to the Christian himself, are his repellings of this glorious personage, without whom "nothing can be done or attained to any important purpose in religion." No infant is more constantly and absolutely dependent on the strength and assiduity of others, than is every child of God on the Holy Ghost; with what rapture, therefore, should the Lord's chosen reflect on the assurance that he is willing to grant them gracious influences. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!" Luke 11 : 13. How animating to the disciples of Jesus, are his words to them, uttered just as he was preparing to withdraw from earthly scenes. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." John 14 : 16, 17. If any, who are enrolled among the nominal friends of the Redeemer, are cold and formal in religion, they may not attribute their state to the sovereignty of God in withholding sacred influences. They have grieved the Spirit; on themselves rests the guilt of their unbecoming and criminal condition; but should they not speedily repent of this wickedness, Jehovah, in righteous anger, may leave them



for a long time, as he often did his ancient erring people. "They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord ; but they shall not find him ; he hath withdrawn himself from them." Hos. 5 : 6. Why was Israel so frequently subdued by enemies ? In every case, and the instances were numerous, the incipient cause was grieving the Holy Spirit. Had the Israelites never incurred this charge, no hostile nations could have gained advantage over them. Churches always are strong or weak, according as they secure the presence of this Almighty Agent, or induce him to withdraw from them. Zion languisheth at present, in this or that place, because the Spirit is not there to bless. Desolation must continue till he come again with saving help. Weep over your sins, ye that have banished the Comforter, and importunately beseech his return.

#### PRAYER.

Prayer has been frequently and variously defined ; he, however, understands its nature best, who is most in its exercise. No set expressions can convey a correct idea of what it is, to him who never draws acceptably near to God. It is the golden chain which joins the soul of the humble suppliant on earth, to the heart of him sitting on the throne in the heavens. Words are not essential to the offering of prayer, though they are appropriate. Jehovah hears thoughts ; he reads the language of feelings. That definition of an ancient assembly of divines, so long admired, is thus expressed : " Prayer is the offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies." Much having the name of prayer, would be excluded, and justly, by this exposition.

There are different parts of prayer, such as invocation, or a



calling upon the Most High for assistance in the performance ; adoration, in which the greatness of the Being approached is acknowledged, and also the unworthiness of the suppliant to appear before him ; confession, wherein both sins of omission and commission are admitted to have been many, unreasonable and aggravated ; and also their eternal demerit expressed, as known and in a measure felt ; thanksgiving for favors already received, and which have been numberless, yet each, could its value be fully seen, would call forth the most fervent expressions of gratitude ; petitions, which are appropriately presented subsequently to the parts previously named. No limit is here set, provided the petitioner come before the throne, with just apprehensions of the Being addressed, and of his own relation as a dependent, guilty, needy creature. The whole should be concluded with a general ascription of power, glory, and praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. It is not, indeed, requisite that every prayer should possess all these parts developed ; yet every intelligent Christian must see that they naturally constitute what may be termed a systematic prayer.

*Prayer as a Duty.*

Our relations to the Supreme Being, obviously make it obligatory upon us to pray unto him. In our weakness, strength should be sought from above. Thence, too, illumination ought to be invoked, that we may be children of light, walking in the beams of the Lord's countenance. Dangers threaten all around, from which, or through which, none but God can guard us. Being the recipients of hourly blessings, without ceasing, we should make grateful returns to their infinite Source. Now on probation, and soon to appear at the bar of Him who made and preserves us, and to whom we must give account for all our conduct, we ought frequently and earnestly to seek guidance

and grace, that we may so live on earth, as to share in the eternal benedictions of Jehovah.

The light of nature alone teaches men that they ought to pray. We find that among all nations where any forms of religion are observed, that this is one, and by no means regarded as of little consequence. The thousands of smoking heathen altars are surrounded by devotees, devoutly supplicating the deities whom their nations adore. We have a more sure word of prophecy. The Scriptures guide us unto the throne of grace; they direct us to seek the Lord; to call upon him and give him no rest. We are exhorted to watch and to pray; to do it without ceasing. "Praying always with all prayer, and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." We are directed in every thing to let our requests be made known unto God. It is declared to be the will of God, "that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting."

#### *Necessary Qualifications.*

No one can offer acceptable prayer without a firm belief in the divine existence. "For he that cometh to God, must believe that he is." We cannot pray to a nonentity. A scepticism in regard to the point, whether there be a God, necessarily shuts one up to practical atheism. Some correctness of views, in respect to the attributes and character of the Supreme Being, is essential. Those having the Scriptures, must receive their testimony. A first duty with each to whom that volume comes, is to embrace fully its doctrines on all subjects. It will be mocking the Holy One, to approach Him in prayer, if his own testimony concerning himself be not admitted. Doubts may sometimes disturb the mind of the humble; but they are altogether unwelcome, and help is immediately sought for their expulsion. Prayers must be

offered to God through Christ, and not to or through saints and angels. These finite creatures have no power to prevail with the Almighty ; praise, not prayer, is their employment. What do they know of our hearts, without an acquaintance with which it cannot be decided that our prayers ought to be accepted? Moreover, some whom men rank with the *saved*, and supplicate, perhaps, as patron saints, may be with the irrecoverably lost in hell. In saying that prayers should be addressed to God only, the design is not to specify the Father in distinction from the Son and the Spirit ; for these are truly God. Primitive Christians prayed directly to the Redeemer. It is both common and scriptural to call upon the Holy Ghost in prayer. With great frequency his aid is invoked in worship.

Again : a just estimate of ourselves is demanded, in order that our prayers be accepted. We must feel that we are dependent, guilty and needy. "My help cometh from the Lord." "We have sinned and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments." "Help me, O Lord, my God." "Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of man." Christ has exhibited, in the parable of the Pharisee and publican, both the wrong and the right state of mind in our supplications to the Most High.

Such favors must be sought as there is reason to suppose God can consistently bestow. It would be improper to ask for sunshine at midnight ; for harvest in spring ; for rain and a clear sky at the same time. We may not pray for health, while disregarding its established laws. Miracles are not to be sought in this age, nor could they ever be lawfully asked to counteract the folly of the suppliant. Not even the salvation of the soul ought to be asked in prayer, except that it may be secured in accordance with gospel provisions. What more decided mark can there be of hostility to Jehovah, than

praying to be delivered from the wrath to come, without an abandonment of the wickedness inevitably conducting to it? Nor should we ever supplicate for things in themselves proper, except in profound submission to the divine will. Otherwise God may, *in judgment*, grant our requests. Thus it often has occurred. A blessing far richer than the one desired may be conferred, if we leave ourselves entirely with infinite Wisdom. "Call unto me and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not." The submission exhibited by the Saviour while agonizing in the garden, ought to be imitated in all our comings to the throne of mercy. "Not my will, but thine be done." Grateful remembrance of mercies received is needful, if we would increase their number by asking of the Lord. Why should we be farther indulged, if insensibility has hitherto characterized us, as recipients? "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken; I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me."

A forgiving frame of mind must be possessed by those who would meet with acceptance in prayer. "For, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." It is possible, that at all times we have enemies; hence it is requisite that a forgiving spirit be uniformly ours. Christ's pattern prayer teaches us to seek forgiveness of God as we forgive our enemies. Now, if they be not forgiven, then our petition is that God will not forgive us. Fearful is the position of him, who, having knelt before his Maker, cherishes in his breast hatred toward a fellow-creature.

Prayers should be ardent. "God often defers our suit, because he loves to have us importunate." Witness the plea of Abraham for Sodom; Moses' intercessions on several

occasions for the rebellious Israelites ; David's supplications for the life of his children ; Daniel's prayer for the termination of the seventy years' captivity ; peruse Ezra's confessions and petitions at Jerusalem, when he was reforming long continued abuses ; hear the cry of Habakkuk for a revival ; see how persevering and earnest certain persons were who went to Jesus for help, in the days of his sojourn on earth ; mark the Messiah himself in Gethsemane. It was an earnest petition which the Tarsian persecutor offered from his humble place in the dust near Damascus. The assembled church supplicated most fervently, as the record of their gatherings, soon after the ascension of the Saviour, show. Dull praying can accomplish but little good. The flesh may be weak, but the spirit should be devout. How small the interest, that permits the petitioner to fall asleep while before the judge whose mercy he invokes. There may be much earnestness without even the utterance of an audible word. Such was the fact with Hannah ; "she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord and wept sore." It is added, "she spake in her heart ; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." 1 Sam. 1. In all the addresses of man to his Maker, regard should be had to the divine glory.

Prayer has what may be designated its circumstantials ; under which term are ranked language and posture. Certainly, the style of addressing the Sovereign of worlds, ought not to be just like that appropriately used in conversation with an equal. On this point, however, we need only consult the Scriptures. The phraseology employed in the prayers there found are suitable for every age ; and who does not know that it is far removed from that extreme of the familiar and colloquial manner sometimes heard ? Nor was the Most High approached by ancient saints, as if he were in every sense infinitely removed from his creatures. Believers, whose prayers are on the sacred record, evidently felt that they



came near to God, and they recognized in him "a great King over all the earth." Genuine piety is shocked by that peculiar freeness of words in prayer, which implies no awe upon the soul. Where feeling is deep, there is not much danger in respect to language. Strong, sanctified emotion will seek suitable terms, which, grammatical or ungrammatical, sound well, because they are the medium of acceptable address to God. Not the most fastidious ear complains of the language flowing from lips moved by a glowing heart. Burning love to Christ atones for a thousand mistakes in expression. Of errors in the words of prayer, his are the most offensive, who makes a *display* of learning, while leading the devotions of an assembly. What art thou, vain mortal, attempting before thy Maker? Articulate sounds, as before intimated, are not essential to the acceptableness of prayer; yet words are needful for the best development of spiritual emotions. There are, indeed, groanings which cannot be uttered. The soul, however, generally seeks an audible utterance. Forbid her doing it, and her inward fires may be smothered. Though God do not need that we should employ our organs of speech in order that he may ascertain the heart's condition, we need them for our own good. It is not in our power to be so inwardly conversant with all the springs of the soul, as to know how they are prepared to act before we call them into action.

No better exercise for disciplining the heart can be found than that which consists in giving definiteness to its emotions in the words of prayer. Thanks to God, we may converse with him, in meditation, when, by reason of weakness, we are destitute of the ability of holding communion in words with our fellow-men; but ah, how little do those avail themselves of this high privilege, who, blest with the gift of speech, in healthfulness and activity, never lift up their voice unto him! Let the heart, the lips, and the tongue, all unite in prayer, Whether or not, we may employ *printed forms* of prayer

needs no special argument on either side. The question in regard to them is simply one of expediency. Let those who can best serve God by using forms, avail themselves of such helps; but let no human authority attempt to bind a single rational creature to a limited or unlimited adherence to them. Jehovah forbids the soul to be thus bound down to any stereotype modes of addressing him. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, and this divine Agent often works wondrously, and sometimes very suddenly in the heart of the suppliant. Prayer is direct communion of the soul with her Sovereign, the beamings of whose countenance have, at times, a most transforming power. Shall a fellow-being dictate to me the terms in which I must call upon the Lord in the day of trouble, or when prosperity shineth as mid-day brightness? Must I go unto a book, before I can speak unto my Maker? That would be tyranny indeed! No earthly authority should ever prescribe the only words by which one may tell Jehovah his grief and joy, hope and fear. Face to face, the suppliant may speak to the Lord. "In the primitive simplicity of the Jewish church, there is no evidence that its worship was conducted by forms, though, in its degeneracy, they were introduced and greatly multiplied. Nor can it be alleged with any plausibility, that a liturgy was prescribed by the authority of Christ, or sanctioned by primitive apostolical usage in his church." \*

Posture in prayer is a point of some interest. Standing and kneeling have been practised in all ages, we have reason to believe. Entire prostration upon the ground has been sometimes adopted, and this posture is indicative of great depression of soul, an overwhelming sense of need and unworthiness. These three postures are all which the Scriptures countenance,

---

\* Dr. Porter.

and it is well for us not to be innovators, where divine regulations are established.

A word is required respecting the length of prayers. This, of course, should vary according to circumstances ; but we are never heard for our much speaking. "It is far better to pray often, than to make long prayers." An eminent Christian has remarked, "I do my errand at the throne of grace most directly, when I have the best spirit of prayer." The following rebuke once administered, is often applicable: "You prayed me into a good frame, and you prayed me out of it." Christ has left us a timely caution: "Use not vain repetitions." In the retirement of the closet, we are in no danger of continuing too long on our knees before God ; in social meetings, and in public assemblies, it is necessary to be short.

### *Motives to Pray.*

These are many and powerful. By coming aright to the Lord, we discharge an important duty, and avail ourselves of a high privilege, as well as enjoy the greatest honor allowed to men on earth. It is admittance into the audience chamber of the King of the universe, with entire freedom, in making known our requests. We may come boldly unto the throne of grace, and find help in time of need. How broad the assurance: "Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you ; for every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened." Heaven has no blessing, which man is capable of enjoying, that the humble petitioner may not procure. "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?" Whatever God sees will be beneficial to us, he is ready to confer, when it is appropriately implored.

The immediate *reflex* influence of prayer, should be regarded as of unlimited value. A heavenly frame of mind is cultivated by the exercise, and this fact ought to be a strong inducement to practise it. Wickedness is held in check by the intercessions of the Christian, and by the same means, the glory of God is advanced in the world, directly and extensively. "The prayers of men have saved cities and kingdoms from ruin. Prayer hath raised dead men to life ; hath stopped the violence of fire ; shut the mouths of wild beasts ; hath altered the course of nature ; caused rain in Egypt, and drought in the sea ; it made the sun to go from west to east, and the moon to stand still, and rocks and mountains to walk."\* Vain is any attempt to unfold the full benefits of prayer ; its power for good shall be seen and felt by millions in eternity. The saved will attribute their elevation to the skies, so far as instruments in time were concerned, very much to this holy service.

"Restraining prayer, we cease to fight ;  
Prayer makes the Christian's armor bright,  
And Satan trembles, when he sees  
The weakest saint upon his knees."

### *An Objection.*

From the fact of the divine immutability, is raised by some an argument to prove the inutility of prayer. It is said that whatever the Supreme Being intends to give us, he will bestow without our asking, nor can any supplications of ours draw from him aught which he intends to withhold ; his purposes being unchangeable. However plausible this reasoning may appear, it cannot endure inspection. Indeed the basis on which it rests, furnishes an unmovable foundation for confidence in the efficacy of prayer. Were God mutable, what

---

\* Jeremy Taylor.

promise of his could be trusted? He is immutably the hearer and the answerer of prayer. It was his eternal purpose to receive the petitions of those whom he determined to locate on this globe, but who then existed only in his infinite plans. Encouragement to pray, arises from the fact, that Jehovah is now, and will forever, remain the hearer and answerer of prayer. "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them." The mind harboring the objection here considered, is not in a state to procure desired good by prayer; for in order to meet with success, there must be not only a belief that God exists, but also, he is to be regarded as the "rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

#### CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION.

##### *Its nature explained.*

1. It does not imply a state of mental indifference. Where there is no choice, there can be no submission; for a mind in that condition, has nothing which it can submit. Those things respecting which we have no preferences, we let take their own course, without either joy or grief. Generally, however, we have a wish concerning what is taking place. The Christian is placed in a school of discipline, and on account of his waywardness, is often experiencing the chastening of the Almighty. Chastisement is not congenial to our natures; the rod of the Lord cannot, in itself, be agreeable to our feelings. Man has a choice in regard to pleasure and pain; the former, he loves; the latter, he cannot; and so long as he is a rational creature, it must be a matter of concern which of the two is allotted to him.

2. A strong desire to escape all suffering, is not necessarily wrong. Sin is the parent of suffering; this parent we ought to abhor; nor are we required to love the offspring for its



own sake, or that of its descent. Human beings were formed for happiness ; a desire for it is implanted within them, and the great requirements of God, if followed, will be attended by true and abiding happiness. On account of our perversity, we must be pained ; still we are not called upon to love even those inflictions which we know to be designed for our good. The Spirit of kindness and wisdom which sends them and the fruits which they bear, we should greatly prize ; but doing this is something different from loving the chastisement for its own sake. The Lord who afflicts, has no delight in the mere sufferings of his people. “ But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion, according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.”

3. Deep solicitude about our own and others' well-being is not necessarily incompatible with genuine submission to the will of God. True, we must desire and seek temporal good, and life eternal, only in the way appointed by him, from whom all good proceeds. It is enjoined upon us to make our calling and election sure. We are commanded to do with our might whatsoever our hand findeth to do. We are pointed to the grave as the termination of all efforts for ourselves and for others. He that submits to God is always zealously affected in those things which are well pleasing to the all-wise Ruler. Listlessness is not an element in submission ; there is a crown which should attract the eye ; there is a prize for every one to win, or be condemned for not doing it. Tears ought to bedew our faces, because our fellow-beings fear not God ; and the perils of our own souls should render us tremblingly alive to our prospects for the world to come. How often is the parent compelled to look upon a suffering, dying child. To desire its recovery, to use diligently and anxiously all suitable means for its restoration, is not wrong. He may cry earnestly to God for divine interposition in its behalf. The most

importunate prayers for the restoration of the sick to health, are not displeasing to the Lord, while the question of recovery remains unsettled. Christ prayed, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me;" and to follow his example when the cup of sorrow is placed in our hands, cannot be wrong. But,

4. Christian submission does require us to say from the heart, in respect to all things and circumstances, the will of the Lord be done. Though we cannot love pain, and though we may desire and endeavor to avoid it, yet we must willingly endure it, if such be the pleasure of God. The comforts and conveniences of life, we may labor to obtain, but should the Most High defeat our toils, it will be our duty to acquiesce without a murmur. Husbandmen ought to prepare their ground, cast in the seed, and pray for a plentiful harvest; but it is their duty to submit without complaint, if the season be cold, and the harvest scanty. Merchantmen, in committing their vessels to the dangers and uncertainties of the sea, are not divinely prohibited from desiring prosperity; they may supplicate Him who rules the winds and the waves, for success to their investments; still they are required to feel and say, Not our wills, but the Lord's be done. Enterprises of benevolence are important, yea, essential to the advance of Christ's kingdom; the friends of truth should plan and pursue measures for Zion's enlargement. Infinite Wisdom, however, may see reasons for disappointing the most ardent aims of the pious.

" God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm."

The young man, who, burning with desire to preach the gospel, begins a preparation for the ministry, may hope to enter, at length, the public service of his Saviour; among his daily petitions he should ask that he may be the means of

extensive good in the vineyard of his Master. Still he, too, must say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Suppose you are a parent, and the child that you love as your own life, is near unto death ; all efforts for its relief fail ; what now *may* you, and what may you *not* do ? The reply is, use every suitable means, and commit the case in earnest prayer to the Lord. Imitate the importunity of the Syrophenician mother and the perseverance of David, on an occasion similar to your own ; and while doing thus, let your will sweetly and perfectly bow to the sovereign Lord of all. In each relation of life, in every variety of condition, the pleasure of God must be made our pleasure. "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done."

*The Duty of thus submitting.*

1. The will of God is *right*. Crossing as his requirements may be to our feelings, he is just in his demands ; and his will is the great law of the universe ; whatever accords with it, is proper ; all at variance, is improper. We ought to do *right*, though it require much self-denial. If one wrong be allowed, why not another, and where shall the course lead. Were this man permitted to go counter to justice, so might that and every one. Moral beings need some standard ; some ultimate appeal in all cases of difficulty and doubt. They have it in the will of the Most High. Whenever a question is to be solved relative to moral obligation, and in respect to doing or not doing, the inquiry should ever be, What is the divine will ? That being ascertained, it should be felt that an end has come to searching for duty. Submission to immutable right, cannot be wrong. To dispute the supremacy of Jehovah's will, argues a very undesirable frame of mind ; yea, a contractedness and obstinacy, which are at a great remove from that state of soul, which short-sighted, dependent creatures should possess.

2. The will of God is *best*. In all cases, where the divine

pleasure conflicts with human plans, the former is not only right, but it is best. The purposes of mankind, when set on foot with the purest motives, are imperfect, and perhaps of evil tendency. Our wisest designs are characterized by much weakness, if not absolute folly. The will of Jehovah always has reference to the general interests of the universe; the highest good of his government, *as a whole*, is ever kept in view by him. Surely an infinite excellence must be more important than any particular interest. Hence, should the divine will ever be at variance with what seems essential to one's personal comfort, it is necessary that the individual good should yield to the general. But with the great fact before us, that Jehovah has always a regard to the welfare of his entire kingdom, we have no hesitancy in saying that compliance with his will does always promote the happiness of those who comply with it. I am speaking of *real* Christian submission. There is what may be termed a forced submission. Persons, at times, yield because they must. This is a submission of no worth. God does not accept it, for the heart is not in it.

Such as submit in this way, do it because they cannot help it. Were resistance possible, any thing having the appearance of submission would be the most distant from them. A yielding of this kind was that of Pharaoh and his host, when they gave up to the conquering power of the Lord, exhibited in the waves of the sea. This is the submission of multitudes who die. They cling to life, and would not leave the world were it possible for them to remain longer; for they only bow to death, as doth the expiring soldier beneath the fatal stroke of a conqueror.

3. Submission to the will of God, is necessary for securing his favor. He cannot approve of those who regard not his pleasure. Self-willed rebels he must resist and defeat. Whether they be angels or men that array themselves against

his government, his very nature is hostile to them. While all who bow cheerfully to him, dwell under the very brightness of his benignity, the obstinate are threatened momentarily by the overhanging clouds of his accumulated indignation. But with joy we record the fact, that no past insubordination to the Lord's will, can prejudice him against the bestowment of favors upon any person who now meekly submits to him. At all times, the act of voluntary surrender introduces the subject into the very centre of blessings. The great question in controversy between Jehovah and his rational creatures on earth, is simply this, Whose will shall prevail? As to the ultimate result, there can be no doubt, for Omnipotence will surely be triumphant. But probationers are now favored with terms of reconciliation, by which their guilt may be forgiven, and themselves brought into the dearest relationship to the Almighty.

Special occasions for the exercise of Christian submission frequently occur in the common concerns of life. Our intentions are crossed by the providences of God. The plans upon which we have doted are destroyed. Health is prostrated when its enjoyment seems the most desirable, and friends are torn from us at the time their absence appears the least endurable. Naught of an earthly nature can be regarded as of long or certain continuance. Even the cause which God himself loves, and for which he requires his children to live and labor, is at times enveloped in darkness impenetrable. So much veiled in mystery are the methods of divine compassion, that faith sometimes staggers; yet whoever is conscious of obstinately withholding a sincere assent to the righteousness of Jehovah, should not regard himself as a Christian. "We then are disposed, as Christ was, when our wills are in every thing melted into the will of God, though ever so displeasing to flesh and blood." Bring thyself, reader, to the test furnished by Jesus.



## HEAVEN.

Both the singular and the plural of the word heaven, often recur in the Bible. Sometimes they indicate the region of air above us, as when the birds are termed fowls of heaven. In other passages the visible expanse is intended, as where heaven is said to be stretched out as a curtain. We read of the heaven of heavens, that is, the highest of all heavens, which is the dwelling-place, in a special sense, of God; the capital of his kingdom. In this article, I employ the word heaven, to designate the resting place of the redeemed.

1. Heaven is a place. Its locality in the universe none knoweth, except the Builder of it. The Scriptures invariably represent it as a place, and not as a mere condition. "He hath prepared for them a city." Reason surely teaches the same doctrine. Christ's human body must be somewhere. Enoch and Elijah passed with their clayey tabernacles from time into eternity; they went from earth to heaven; were translated. The bodies of the saints who die, are to be raised; and such of the pious as may be upon earth, when the Saviour comes, will be so changed, that their bodies, and those which are raised from the dead, shall correspond in nature and attributes. Based on the fact that God is a Spirit, and that angels are spiritual beings, also on the assertion of the apostle, that raised bodies are spiritual, an objection has been urged against the idea of a local heaven. Of the divine essence we can know nothing, except what inspiration tells us. The supposition that angels are possessed of material bodies is not unscriptural; and it accords with our ideas of their natures. In regard to the spiritual bodies which the saints are to have, subsequently to the resurrection, it is evident that they will be precisely what the Scriptures assert — spiritual; yet will they also be material. A body that is not material, seems an impos-

sibility. If mankind are raised at all from the grave, they must come forth with material bodies. There is nothing else to be revived. "It is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body." And what is this spiritual body ? Simply a body devoted to an existence of spiritual enjoyments and pursuits. A natural body is one which possesses animal life, and is nourished by the products of time ; it is also sinful, and a hindrance to the soul in her heavenly aspirations. After the resurrection the body will be independent of what now constitutes its life, and wholly subject to the soul. It will be in every respect adapted to the holy society and services of heaven. Though material, we may suppose that it will be matter of so refined a texture, that it would be invisible to our present organs of sight.

2. Heaven is a place of resplendent glory. To such a conclusion we should come, were we to reason from analogy. All God's works, over which sin has not poured its pollution, are highly alluring. If the less are beautiful, much more so are the greater. If the starry heavens declare his glory, shall not the heaven of heavens infinitely transcend these ? Shells and flowers are so formed and finished as irresistibly to win us by their attractiveness. Insects, whose existence is limited by a day, are richly attired ; their little wings are painted with a skill never yet acquired beneath the skies. The earth is not what it was, yet it is exceedingly beautiful ; and were we permitted to survey each of the worlds in the kingdom of our God, should we not find, every where, equal, if not surpassing beauty ? Has, then, the Maker of the universe adorned all his works, except his own seat of government ? Reason answers, no ; and revelation exhausts its images in attempting to give us an impression of the glory of heaven. Nor is the aim wholly to exhibit what constitutes its highest excellence — *holiness* ; but it seeks to make us feel that the structure of the celestial city is of the most rich and brilliant material. "The building of the wall of it was of jasper ; and the city was pure

gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones." "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls." "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

3. Heaven is a place of perfect holiness. Evil cannot exist there. The angels in it are sinless, and so are the spirits of just men, who have been received into the presence of God. "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." Jehovah has prepared another place to be the eternal receptacle of all iniquity; hell, not heaven, is the everlasting habitation of the fallen spirits and of unrepenting men. An unholy thought, should it find itself indulged in the mind of one of those about the throne, would, doubtless, occasion its author endless banishment from the presence of the Lord.

4. Heaven is a place of perfect joy. It is impossible for sorrow to exist where there is no unholiness. As the world of which we are speaking, is replete with holiness, so it must be with happiness. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore." Jehovah will preserve, by his unchangeable omnipotence, the blessedness of his servants. Whatever can conduce to the bliss of an angel or of a saint, he will not withhold. The Scriptures present heaven to us as a vast brotherhood; a perfect society. There meet the holy from all parts of the universe. "Heaven is an ocean, in which preceding dispensations have an end." Of that blissful assembly it may be prospectively said, "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." "Everlasting joy shall be upon their head." "And there shall be no night there,"—"for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign forever and ever."

5. Heaven is that place in which the Godhead displays its glory in the highest degree and without cessation. Only

glimpses of the divine excellence are obtained, in time, by the most favored. Clouds and darkness seem, for the most part, to saints on earth, round about the throne. Just how the Father manifests himself to the angels and saints in that world, is to us inconceivable; nor do we know how created minds there communicate one with another. The fact, that Jehovah fills heaven with his glory, is revealed. Christ is made to appear very prominent in the representations of the celestial state. "And I beheld and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders, and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor and glory, and blessing." He stands upon the heavenly Zion, and with him are an "hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." It is in his presence, not less than before the throne, that is congregated "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues," "clothed with white robes and palms in their hands." Their song exalts the Son equally with the Father. "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." Of those, who, through great tribulation, have reached the blest abode, it is said, that the Lamb "shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The holy seer at Patmos saw no temple in heaven, "for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it."

Into this adorned, holy, and happy place, believers in Jesus are admitted *immediately* on their leaving time. Some per-

sons suppose that there is what may be called an intermediate place, in which both the righteous and the wicked are sent at death, the former being in peace and the latter in suffering. The two classes are not together, and yet not very far removed one from the other. Both reside in Hades; but one dwells in the part termed Gehenna or Tartarus, and the other in Paradise. Such a doctrine owes its origin, I think, to a heathen fancy, rather than to the oracles of God. Purgatory, as held by Catholics, evidently was derived from paganism, just as most of the other absurd notions of that strange sect were. Nor is it difficult to account for the doctrine of the intermediate place, without finding a shadow of it in the Scriptures.

Christ encouraged his followers to expect at once to dwell with himself, when they should be called from earth. And where is he? Would an unbiased student of the Bible ever imagine him any where except in the holy of holies? Jesus said that in his Father's house are many mansions, and that he was going to prepare a place for his disciples, and that he would come again to receive them unto himself; "that where I am, there ye may be also." Shall we conclude, that not one of all those whom he thus addressed, has yet arrived at the apartment which was to be made ready by the Saviour? Must we suppose that thousands of years may possibly yet intervene before the apostles shall reach heaven? "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." To the penitent thief, Jesus said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Now, according to the Scriptures, the place thus named is heaven. Paul tells us that himself was caught up to the third heaven, and immediately in repeating the fact, substitutes the word Paradise for heaven. In Rev. 2:7, Christ says to the church at Ephesus, "To him that overcometh, will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the



Paradise of God," and in the twenty-second chapter of the same book, we are told that this tree stands near the throne of the Most High.

The apostle Paul evidently expected to enter his eternal home, whenever he should be called from time. "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." He further speaks of an absence from the body as a being present with the Lord, and he longs for the transition from time to eternity. What he has taught is the teaching of inspiration; his aspirations arose from heavenly influences upon him. "Now, he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of his Spirit." When Stephen was suffering martyrdom, he saw "the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." In that state of agony and of joy, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," admit it to heaven, not to a place inferior. He desired no intermediate abode, and we must think he had no thought of being located till the judgment day, somewhere between the imperfection of his probationary state and the full enjoyment of the upper world. Similar to his have been the feelings of expiring saints in every age. "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ." In what soul, ripened for a holy immortality, is there not the firm persuasion of ascending directly to heaven, when released from the house of clay? Will the Lord disappoint the expectations which himself has raised? Does the Infinite Father debar for ages his own children from the home prepared for them? In those visions, granted to the banished disciple, the martyrs were represented as about the throne; and it was said that God dwells with them. They had not been invited thither for a brief visit, but to abide without ceasing in the presence of Jehovah. The church is represented in the Scriptures as being

divided. It has two grand divisions, one of which is on earth, and the other with God. As individuals depart from the former, they go to increase the ranks of the latter; leaving Zion militant, they are citizens in full of Zion triumphant.

Ye heirs of glory, your path leadeth directly to the celestial Canaan.

“Death, like a narrow sea, divides  
That heavenly land from ours.”

The wilderness journey, performed by ancient Israel, was highly typical of the spiritual pilgrimage assigned to the elect. When Jordan was passed, the promised land was entered. Christ encouraged his disciples to endure the persecutions to which they were subject, with great joy in the prospect of a reward in heaven. Does he not now invite his afflicted servants to persevere faithfully even unto death, that they may receive a crown of life? Should not the thought of an entrance soon to be administered into the joys of the New Jerusalem, comfort the struggling believer? Heaven, thou art as desirable as God can make thee.

“There my Redeemer lives, all bright and glorious,  
O'er sin, and death, and hell he reigns victorious.”

Short is life's journey; and quickly it must terminate. No man now living will be in time a little while hence. Let this fact quicken the Christian to increased fidelity. Away be every hindrance in duty. Welcome sickness, pain, anguish, and death itself; ye are the servants which help me home. I would not live always beneath the skies.

“Father, I long, I faint to see  
The place of thine abode;  
I'd leave these earthly courts, and flee  
Up to thy seat, my God.”

Are there no allurements above to arrest the notice of the sinner? Is he not now like the troubled sea? Does he not need the prospect which animates the humble? Can he covet nothing but hell hereafter? Why, accountable creature, wilt thou rush on, when the end of thy career is so plainly revealed? Is there not enough of sin and sorrow in this world? Turn thy thoughts heavenward, and secure a home eternal and on high.

## HELL.

Candid and prayerful students of the Bible no more doubt the existence of eternal future punishment than they do an endless state of happiness. There is, however, a class of persons, who, though desiring to be reckoned adepts in the Scriptures, boldly deny that *any* will suffer in a future state for sins committed in time. I have no space for an extended discussion of this solemn subject, but will briefly notice one declaration of inspiration. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." Matt. 25: 46. It will be necessary first to examine the connection in which these words occur.

In the 31st verse of the chapter from which they are taken, we are pointed to a coming of Christ. "When the Son of man shall come," etc.

*Several comings* of Christ are mentioned in Scripture. He comes as the Messiah; comes to summon his disciples from earth to heaven; comes to destroy Jerusalem; also to raise the dead, and judge the world. Which of these is intended in the verse just quoted? Not the first, certainly, nor that when he calls the believer home. The former was past at the time the Saviour himself spoke the language under review; the latter is not a literal coming; besides, if it were, no retinue attends him at such times. The reference here, then, must be either to the coming of Jesus at the destruction of Jerusa-

lem, or at the end of the world. Is it the former? Let us compare this description from the lips of the Saviour himself, with what took place when the Romans laid Jerusalem in ruins. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Were such predictions fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem? Did the Son of man then come, attended with all the holy angels? Were all nations gathered together in the sacred city, when the army of Vespasian laid it in ruins? Was there such a separation between the righteous and the wicked, as the Saviour describes? Is there any thing in the sieging and sacking of Jerusalem, answering to the picture presented by the truth-speaking Jesus? Verily nothing! You may as wisely search for the fulfilment of this Scripture in the destruction of any modern city, as in that of Jerusalem! Yea, you might as well look at the phases of the moon, expecting to behold in them a fulfilment of the sublime declarations of Isaiah and Ezekiel, as to the ploughed hills, where stood the holy city, for the accomplishment of what Christ predicted in the passage here considered! As these verses can possibly relate to but one other event, it is to that we should regard them as referring. The coming of the Son of man here mentioned is to raise the dead; to call all nations before him; to separate the righteous from the wicked; to welcome the

former into heaven, and to banish the latter to hell. On that awful, but august occasion, Jesus will appear in great glory; then the holy angels will be with him; then all nations shall be gathered before him, and a separation will take place.

We will next examine the word rendered *everlasting*. Much is urged against the idea that the punishment of the wicked will be endless, from the fact that this term does not always in the Old Testament designate what is absolutely without termination. For instance, the Lord promised the land of Canaan to Abraham and his seed for an everlasting possession. The priesthood of Aaron is designated everlasting, and everlasting hills are mentioned in Gen. 49 : 26. So also are doors in Ps. 24. "Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors." In relation to such a use of this adjective, I observe (1.) That it favors rather than otherwise the doctrine of future endless punishment, provided the word in those passages teaches any thing concerning the future punishment of the wicked. The everlasting possession was one which would not be taken away, if the conditions of its bestowment and continuance should be duly respected. Abraham did receive the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession. His posterity would have enjoyed it till now, and been in a fair way to possess it till the end of time, had they not *forfeited* it. We know it was bestowed for an everlasting inheritance, but the people banished themselves from it. Perhaps, some one says, the title to it must naturally expire, had it not been lost by sin. Where is the proof? Can he show that the deed, by which Jehovah gave Palestine to Abraham and his seed, would ever have been taken away, had they used well the possession? Why might it not have continued to be theirs, even till the old heavens and earth should give place to others? We inquire, to whom else has God ever deeded the land of Israel, but to that people? But, (2.) The word everlasting, in the passages quoted, denotes the continuance of the objects



to which it is appropriated, so long as, from the nature of the case, they can exist. Now take this definition and apply it to future punishment, and we have the doctrine of future endless misery established ; provided, as I have said, this term decides any thing in respect to it ; at least, *that it is limited*, cannot be shown, unless, from the nature of the case, it can be proved that man is not capable of enduring unending misery. (3.) The word everlasting, in the passages cited, determines nothing whatever respecting the doctrine of future punishment. No doubtful question in biblical interpretation can be settled, without a resort to the *original* languages of the Scriptures. The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New in Greek. Of course, the word translated everlasting, in the New Testament, is Greek, and not found of the same form in the Old Testament, for that is Hebrew. These two languages are no more the same than are the English and the Indian. To determine the import of the word, which, in the passage cited at the commencement of this article, is rendered everlasting, its use in the original of the New Testament must be canvassed. Here, it should be remarked, that many words have more than one signification, and that not a few are employed latterly, quite differently from what they once were. The word *θεος*, in Greek, denotes the true God, also a heathen divinity. Before the coming of Christ, it was more generally applied to the latter ; but the New Testament writers designate Jehovah by it. We will now examine the word before us. It is *αιωνιος*, and occurs in the New Testament sixty-six times ; fifty-one times it is used in relation to the righteous.\* As in John 3 : 36, " He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." *ζωην αιωνιον*, 4 : 14. " The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water

---

\* See Professor Stuart's Essays on Future Punishment.

springing up into everlasting life." ζωην αιωνιον, 10 : 28. "And I give unto them everlasting life." ζωην αιωνιον. The same words occur in the two following passages : Acts 13 : 46. "And judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life." Rom. 6 : 23. "The gift of God is eternal life." 2 Cor. 4 : 17. "A far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." αιωνιον βαρος δοξης. 1 Tim. 6 : 12. "Lay hold on eternal life." αιωνιον ζωης. 1 John 3 : 15. "No murderer hath eternal life." ζωην αιωνιον. Jude, 21st verse. "Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." ζωην αιωνιον.

This word occurs twice in connection with Θεος, God, or the glory of God. Rom. 16 : 26. "The everlasting God." αιωνιον Θεον. 1 Tim. 6 : 16. "To whom be honor and power everlasting." ηγατος αιωνιον. There are a few cases in which it is employed in relation to past time. Not an instance, however, occurs where it *necessarily* denotes limited duration. Seven times it is used in connection with future punishment. To what conclusion are we brought? By what rules of interpretation may we limit its meaning relative to the penalty of sin, when we know it has no restriction, as connected with the existence of God, and the felicity of the righteous in the heavenly state? The logical, yea, the only rational, conclusion at which we can arrive is, that the Bible furnishes just as clear, decisive and irresistible evidence of endless misery as of endless happiness. We may as reasonably adopt the creed, *no heaven*, as *no hell*, after death ; or, if we admit the existence of both, the former may as correctly be supposed limited as the latter. There is as much reason to believe that the happiness of the righteous will terminate, as the sufferings of the wicked. Yea, there is as good ground to conclude, that Jehovah will suffer his throne to crumble to dust, and that he will discontinue his own existence, as that the fires of hell will cease to burn. If we receive the Scriptures, we must believe that Christ will, at the judgment day, say to all the wicked, "De-

part from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

How terribly significant is each expression, in this last sentence, passed by the Judge of all upon the finally impenitent. We can conceive of no terms more awfully suggestive. Departing from Christ! It shall be the supreme joy of the believer to dwell with his Divine Master through endless ages. Jesus is the centre of infinite good, yet the sinner must depart from him with a curse; must go, not into some place less glorious than heaven, though not wholly destitute of peace; he must depart into fire, himself being fuel for unquenchable flames. O, to depart from Christ, would be sad indeed, could a benediction from his lips be carried into exile; but the transgressor shall go from the tribunal of his Judge anathematized; shall go to dwell with devils; shall go to endure the agonies of a lake that burneth; shall go to writhe in helpless anguish, in hopeless despair!

Such, thou despiser of Jesus, is thy approaching doom! Most rapidly time bears thee forward; and yet it may be that a wicked zeal is hastening thee on more swiftly still. Pause, read, and ponder this awful sentence! It is the Judge himself who speaks to give the timely warning. If impenitent, thou art as surely hastening directly to Christ's tribunal, and to the hearing of the announcement, "Depart from me," as ever an arrow sped from the bow was hurried to the mark. To that awful scene described by Jesus in the last part of Matt. 25, as to occur at the end of the world, thou must come; a participator there thou wilt be; and O, thy prospect, how dark! thy destiny, how dreadful! Thanks to the Son of God for telling us what shall be, when he cometh in the clouds of heaven with all his holy angels. Now he sitteth not as Arbiter of the world, but as the Messiah who died to redeem. To-day he is not arrayed in the awful insignia of that occasion, when the nations shall be gathered, and eternal destinies settled. He is

not now saying unto you, "Depart from me, ye cursed;" the call at present is, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." O ye wasters of life's precious hours, ye long abusers of grace, ye offenders of God, stop at once in your downward course. Hear, O hear that call from the skies, which entreats you to escape the everlasting fire, and inherit eternal blessedness.

## THE GENERAL RESURRECTION.

It is a doctrine held by Christians, "that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." This article of faith rests wholly on the Scriptures. "Though the stoics believed that certain revolving periods would produce successive renovations in the system of the universe, it does not appear, that any tenet similar to the Christian doctrine of a resurrection was believed, or even known, among the pagan philosophers." "Some glimmerings they had of the soul's immortality, but no knowledge of the reviving of the body."

The sacred volume contains many direct assertions in regard to this doctrine, and likewise various passages, which imply it. Some of both classes will be advanced. "I kill, and I make alive." Deut. 32 : 39. Jewish writers have referred this to the resurrection. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." Job 19 : 25-27. A class of interpreters are quite unwilling to grant this passage the weight, which others, far more judicious, think it possesses. Some will not even allow it to have any reference to the resurrection. They *assume*, that the doctrine was not then believed, and infer, that such a meaning must not be attached to these verses. But by what authority is this assumption made? Was

not Enoch translated, to show the saints their future destiny? *He* did not die, but *they* having died, shall live again, and ascend as well as he. Christ was revealed to the patriarchs, and was not he to them the resurrection and the life? An apostle assures us, that Abraham supposed God would raise Isaac from the dead; yea, from ashes; "from whence also he received him in a figure." Heb. 11 : 19. On what authority shall we conclude, that the holy men of the first ages knew nothing of this resurrection? The Saviour was with them; he was their teacher. The assertions of Job in the verses above quoted, will still be regarded by the mass of humble believers, as relating to the resurrection of the body. The arts of expositors cannot do away with the deep impression, which is made by them on the mind of the unsophisticated reader. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Ps. 17 : 15. "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Isa. 26 : 19. These words of the prophet, taken literally, teach, with great distinctness, the doctrine of the resurrection. If they be figurative, what else than the belief that the dead will be raised, was the foundation of the figure? "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12 : 2. By many, is evidently intended *the many* i. e., the vast multitudes who shall have lived and died. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Hosea 13 : 14. The pious Jews, who suffered under Antiochus, referred with exultation to the resurrection: "It is good, being put to death by men, to look for hope from God, to be raised up again by him." "For thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."



Luke 14 : 14. "Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again, in the resurrection at the last day." John 11 : 24. "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth ; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." 5 : 28, 29.

Some of the apostles insist, in their epistles, very much on the fact, that the dead will be raised. "The whole church, on seeing the Saviour entombed, wept as if salvation were buried with him." But when he arose, his disciples went forth, proclaiming to all this truth. "They taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Being contradicted, they demanded of their opposers, "why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Paul has spoken at length on this subject in the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. His argument triumphantly establishes the doctrine. That Christ was raised is proved, and from the truth of his resurrection is derived unequivocal evidence, that his followers will rise. The *death* of Christ was an unquestionable fact ; and that he arose, more than five hundred witnesses, most of whom, if not all, were then living, could testify. "No single fact in the history of any nation is supported by evidence equal to that, which the apostle Paul hath produced in the 15th chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, in proof our Lord's resurrection from the dead."\* "The arguments," says Saurin, "that persuade us of the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, are so clear and conclusive, that if any difficulty remains, it arises from the brightness of the evidence itself."

Let us notice more particularly the course of the apostle's reasoning, which runs thus, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen,

---

\* Macknight.

then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea ; and we are found false witnesses of God ; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised ; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins." According to this arguing, " the truth of the gospel rests entirely on the truth of Christ's resurrection." Had he failed to rise, his failure would have proved him an *impostor* ; but he did not fail. " Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." " The destiny of all believers is united to that of Jesus Christ. He is risen from the dead ; we, therefore, shall one day rise." Death entered the world by sin ; it is conquered by the Saviour. " For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Paul's reasoning, however, does not necessarily here include any but believers ; though the doctrine that all others will be raised is equally taught in the Scriptures, and by himself in his other writings. His specific object in the chapter before us, led him to insist on only two points ; the first is, that Christ is risen ; the second, that his disciples will be raised. " God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." John in vision " saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." It is as certain that all as that any will be raised.

*The Resurrection viewed in the Light of Reason.\**

We claim that this is purely a doctrine of revelation ; but in so doing, it is not our purpose to imply, that nature has no hints respecting it. Power which can create, must be

---

\* Since this article was written, I have read an exceedingly instructive sermon of President Hitchcock on the Resurrection. I refer to one of his four on the Seasons.

able to renew ; some power has created, therefore there is a power that can renew. "It is doubtless as easy for divine power to restore the union between the soul and the body after it has been dissolved, as to establish such a union at first." When inquiring what may be, we should keep in mind what has been. A mighty agency has exerted itself in the formation of our physical frames. "Particles of these bodies which we now possess once belonged, it may be, to distant islands and continents ; they once passed into the canes of India, or were suspended from the fig-trees of Turkey. Were the mass, thus composed, once dissolved, would either more power or wisdom be required for the reunion of its parts, than was employed in its original formation or its subsequent support?" Do we not constantly witness the effects of a power so great, that we can set no limits to it, and which is therefore appropriately designated infinite? Now what an infinite agent may, if it please, do, no finite being can predict. So far as human foresight reaches, or the mind of man can judge, it may be no more difficult for that agent, (by whatever name called,) which causes seeds to germinate, blossom, and produce fruit, to raise the dead, than it is to perform what it does for the seed. Objections against the doctrine of the resurrection, based on the difficulty of raising a dead body to life, are without weight ; for no man can show that it is at all difficult, while "the continual production of things in the world, is a clear demonstration of the power of God to that effect."

Some writer has observed that the analogies of nature seem designed on purpose to excite expectation of the resurrection. "With the daily and hourly miracles, so to call them, of the vegetable and animal world before our eyes ; with creations, renovations, transitions, and transmigrations innumerable going on, while yet individuality and identity are preserved, nothing ought to be thought incredible or unlikely concerning the destiny of man, which comports with these common wonders, and

which in itself is only an analogous transformation. The probabilities that man is to undergo several transitions, are as a thousand to one of the contrary." The changes through which *we* have already passed are great, perhaps not less so than will be our restoration after we have mouldered for ages.

Beautiful examples of this analogy are seen in the change of worms into richly plumaged insects. Sometimes one remains for weeks in a chrysalis or *aurelia* state. If its element have been the water, it repairs to the margin, "in quest of a convenient place of abode during its insensible state. It attaches itself to a plant, or piece of dry wood, and the skin, which gradually becomes parched and brittle, at last splits opposite the thorax." Through this opening escapes the insect, gay and joyful. It apparently died, and was laid aside, shrouded, and in its own coffin; but it has risen from the dead, bursting from its confinement, and casting off its grave garments. "Who that saw for the first time the little pendent coffin in which the insect lay entombed, and was ignorant of the transformation of which we are now speaking, would ever predict, that in a few weeks, perhaps in a few days or hours, it would become one of the most elegant and active of *winged* insects? And who, that contemplates with the mind of a philosopher this curious transformation, and knows that two years before the insect mounts into the air, even while it is living in water, it has the rudiments of wings, can deny that the body of man may, at some future period, be again invested with vigor and activity, and soar to regions, for which some latent organization may have peculiarly fitted it?" Such natural transformations seem to say to the Christian, thus shalt thou be changed. Now thou sayest "to corruption, thou art my father; to the worm, thou art my mother and my sister;" but thou shalt arise from the sleep of death; that clod constituting thy body, must moulder to dust; yet from it shall come forth a form of celestial brightness and purity. Thy flesh shall

be reanimated, and clothed in immortal beauty and blessedness.

*Attributes of the Raised Body.*

The Scriptures are not very explicit on this point. They teach more the fact of the resurrection than unfold the properties of what is restored. A *body* is raised, and not something else, and it is the same that was buried. The Greek word, translated resurrection, signifies a coming up. Our Saviour says, that those in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth. We are not, however, necessitated to conclude that every particle of dust committed to the tomb will enter into the renewed body. That which shall come forth may be lying in our present frames, as gold in the ore, and not be affected at all by the decomposition of flesh and bones.

Raised bodies of saints will be "covered with a celestial splendor." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament." "The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Perhaps the transfigured body of Christ, when his face shone as the sun and his raiment was white as light, was an exhibition of what the glorified bodies of his people shall be. Are we not taught that they shall be like him in this respect, as well as in the purity and perfection of their souls? Christ will change the vile body of the believer, "that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3: 21.

The apostle Paul styles the raised body, spiritual. Some, as I have stated in the article on *heaven*, suppose that the body will not be *material*, but if it be not so, then in what sense will it be a body at all? The term spiritual, as applied to body, is much like *carnal*, applied to mind. A spiritual body is one that is set apart to spiritual offices. "It is of so fine a



texture as to be supported merely by the presence of a rational spirit." Such bodies, it is by no means improbable that angels possess; but the matter which clothes them may be too much refined for our eyes to discern it. The soul of the saint will not be impeded in the future state by its body. With a speed of which we now have no conception, she may pass from place to place in the wide universe of her God. How great the contrast between the body as it is and what it will become after the resurrection. Now it is frail, disordered, and dull; a hindrance to the spirit. Then it will be elastic, eternally free from sickness, full of vivacity, and ever serviceable to the soul. At present it is sensual; hereafter it will be holy. It is now confined to the earth; then it may soar to the zenith of creation. How humble, ghastly, deformed, and loathsome is the body as committed to the grave; how excellent, inviting and resplendent when it shall come, at the call of Heaven's summons, from its long slumbers under the power of death. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." But we should bear in mind that these delightful representations of the resurrection body are applicable only to the saints. "What intense agonies may be endured by the immortal incorruptible bodies of the wicked, can be conceived of by none before the day of judgment. Each one of the senses may be an inlet to misery, and pain may be seated in every member." It is not impossible that their future bodies will exhibit constantly the marks of the abuses received in time. In the grave, the body of the saint shall be purified; but what evidence is there that the sinner's will undergo any favorable change?

*The Time of the Resurrection.*

It is to occur as the last act but one, in the great drama of earth, and it will take place immediately preceding the judgment. We know not a substantial reason for concluding that any of the dead will be raised prior to the general resurrection. Some arose at the time of the crucifixion, but we do not gather from the word of God, that there is to be more than one literal resurrection from this time onward. The sentiment, that there will be, seems based on a wrong interpretation of Scripture. "Christ, the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death."

We are taught, that a signal will be given, by which the dead will be summoned from their resting places. "For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible." It is said that Christ shall send forth his angels "with a great sound of a trumpet;" and that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." The Scriptures furthermore inform us, that many will be living at the time of the resurrection, who shall not die, but be changed. There may be a more dense population on the earth at that period, than at any preceding time. From all the places of their sepulture, earth's myriads shall awake at the word of the life-giving Jesus. Death's leaden eyelids must then be opened to sleep no more.

Pollok, in the "Course of Time," has given a graphic and impressive description of the resurrection. The day comes wholly unexpected. Its morning seems like others, and every where mankind are pursuing their usual occupations. Learned

sceptics have just proved that the earth will continue forever, and that sin will go unpunished, when suddenly the sun is wrapt in darkness, and his beams return up to the throne of God. The globe is veiled in moonless, starless night. All mortals are held in horrible suspense, and as they pause, chariots are heard, rolling in heaven. Robed in excessive light, an angel stands and blows the trump of God, which sounds through all the mansions of the departed,

“Awake, ye dead,  
Be changed, ye living, and put on the garb  
Of immortality. Awake, arise,  
The God of judgment comes !”

*Particular Objections noticed.*

We meet with what are thought to be formidable objections to this doctrine. They are not drawn from the Scriptures, but professedly from facts. Particles of the human body, we are told, after its death, enter into the composition of vegetables, and thence pass into the flesh of other human beings, and form parts of those when the grave becomes their receptacle. How then it is inquired, can each individual have a complete body at the resurrection, when at the period of their deaths, (occurring not at the same time,) one has many of the particles which the other had before him ? To such suggestions, our reply is, it cannot be proved, that in a single instance, two persons, at the time of their dissolution, possessed any of the same particles. Could it, however, be proved a fact that they did ; yea, could it be shown that one half or three fourths of what constitutes one human body, at its burial, is in another, when the latter is committed dust to dust, the fact would not militate in the least against the doctrine of the resurrection. Inspiration does not inform us, that the soul will “covet a reunion” with every particle of its original tabernacle. A small part of it may be

sufficient to form the resurrection body, and yet personal identity be preserved. But if the Almighty require the whole that was deposited, he will guard it with a care peculiar to himself. It cannot be difficult for him to watch over human dust. Solicitude on our part is needless. Cast away vain fears, and banish forever all cavilling about the scattered dust of the departed.

Some presumptuous beings inquire, of what use will the resurrection be? They affirm it to be an impossibility for them to perceive any advantages in it. And may God not see that good will arise from it? Do ignorant mortals understand all else except this particular? Blush, weak creature, to call in question the wisdom of thy Creator! What he does is wisely done, and that he will raise the dead, is revealed in the Scriptures. Doubtless, when the small and great of our race shall be made to stand before him, his power, wisdom, and goodness will be wonderfully illustrated by that event. The Highest needs not the solicitude of our ignorance, lest he in some instance may seem to have acted injudiciously.

“The divine laws are the rule of duty to the entire man, and not to the soul only; and they are obeyed or violated by the soul and body in conjunction. The soul designs; the body executes. The senses are the open *ports*, to admit temptations. Carnal affections deprave the soul, corrupt the mind, and mislead it. The heart is the fountain of profaneness, and the tongue expresses it. Thus the members are instruments of iniquity.” So when the soul begins to be sanctified the body becomes a servant to it in performing the divine will. “Hence it follows, that there will be a universal resurrection, that the rewarding goodness of God may appear in making the bodies of his servants gloriously happy with their souls, and their souls completely happy in union with their bodies; and that his revenging justice may be manifest in punishing the bodies of the wicked, with eternal torments answerable to their guilt.”

Mankind are neither purely matter nor simply mind, but constituted of each. For a while the constituent elements in their natures must be divided; but afterwards they shall be reunited and abide thus forever. Should it be otherwise, persons could hardly be the same in the future state that they are in this; but their identity is to be preserved. The very being that served God in time, shall rejoice before him in eternity; and those who here refuse his grace must there endure his wrath.

It is true, indeed, that "the resurrection of the dead must be admitted to be a great mystery;" and what is there revealed unto us in the works of nature, or by Providence, or by the Scriptures, which does not wholly transcend our comprehension? All is mysterious which the eye sees and the ear hears. We may, with propriety, inscribe *mystery* on every object, event, and mental operation. "The glorious prospect, opened by this doctrine, is not less animating, because it surpasses our comprehension; on the contrary, its profundity only seems to increase our astonishment, and enhance our gratitude."

#### THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

The word of God explicitly reveals a general judgment, sometimes termed a day, by which is meant a fixed definite time. Language like the following, is employed to set forth this great event. "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Acts 17: 31. "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Rom. 14: 10. "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Heb. 9: 27. "But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same



word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Pet. 3: 7. "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." Jude 6. "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." Rev. 20: 12, 13.

The truth taught so clearly in the passages above cited is presented indirectly in other texts. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12: 14. To the young man who will not heed warning, inspiration addresses this solemn admonition, "Know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." "When the Son of man shall come in his glory and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations." Matt. 25: 31, 32. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 Thess. 1: 7-10. "I charge thee therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom." 2 Tim. 4: 1. All parts of the Scriptures rest on the assumption that mankind are to give an account unto God; that there is to be a final

reckoning with them, when their state for eternity will be openly proclaimed.

*The Design of the Judgment.*

It is not to make known unto Jehovah the characters of his accountable creatures, who in successive generations appear on the earth, and act for a while, and then are seen here no more. "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." "And by him actions are weighed." "His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men." "His understanding is infinite." Nor will the eternal destiny of the dead be undecided till the day of final judgment. Every one on leaving time, goes, as did the betrayer of Christ, to his own place. When the dust returns to the earth as it was, the spirit goes back to God who gave it, and its condition is determined for endless ages. "The general judgment will be a confirmation, and a consummation of each particular judgment." Though God need not this great event to aid him in the administering of justice, and though the everlasting state of the departed be unalterably settled, before that scene shall arrive; yet it is necessary that the Governor of the universe should exhibit to his intelligent accountable creatures the manner of his administration. His ways are often mysterious. Faith doubts not, that the Judge of all the earth does right; still *it* is not always able to grasp the reason, nor to understand the wherefore. "Clouds and darkness are round about him." On that august occasion, which we are contemplating, it shall be seen that the Almighty has ever been guided by unerring wisdom, and infinite benevolence. "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee;" "and all iniquity shall stop her mouth." The Most High will make it apparent, that his entire procedure was holy, just, and good. The witnessing universe shall reverberate, when the

last act of the judgment is past, with the exclamations, "True and righteous are thy judgments;" "Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

*The Doctrine highly practical.*

All the transactions of time are in near connection with eternity. The last judgment will be an event to which every other relates. It is *a day* for which all others were made. Christ and his apostles frequently turned the attention of their auditors to the retributions of this occasion. To Capernaum Jesus said, "It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." Matt. 11: 24. We hear him affirming "that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Matt. 12: 36. The graphic description in the closing part of Matt. 25th chapter, is from the Saviour, and *paints* the proceedings of the last day. I know there are those who would bury all the threatenings and terrors of the gospel beneath the rubbish of ancient Jerusalem; but they might as wisely attempt to conceal them any where else. When the Redeemer was departing to heaven, two messengers were sent down, who thus addressed the disciples, while the latter were looking intently upon their ascending Master: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Standing on Mars' hill, surrounded by orators, poets, and philosophers, Paul preached repentance, and urged, as a motive to its exercise, the judgment to come; and when arraigned before Felix, he directed that wicked governor's attention to the same terrible event. While expostulating with the Roman believers for certain improprieties of conduct among them, he reminds them of "the judgment seat of Christ." Assigning to the Corinthians reasons for his own course, he admonishes them, that himself and all

mankind must appear before the tribunal of the final Judge. The believers at Thessalonica are pointed to the scenes of the last day, that they may be helped to endure patiently their present sufferings. Saints every where are exhorted by Peter to keep their eye on "the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Jude tells us, that the fallen angels are to be judged at the great day ; and he refers us to a prophecy of Enoch, "the seventh from Adam : " "Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." John was instructed to exhibit, in glowing pictures, some parts of the judgment scenes, that beholders of his impressive views might hasten their flight from the wrath to come, and shelter themselves in the secret place of the Most High.

It is not more certain in regard to any individuals, that they now live and will ere long die, than it is, that they will be judged. What is true of some in this respect, is equally so of all mankind. Every one must give an account of himself to God, and in doing it he will be required to answer for the use made of *time*. Each day, with its hours and moments, should be spent in honoring the Lord. He calls human beings into existence, and allots to them the period of their sojourn on earth. Whether their continuance be longer or shorter, life should be devoted to his glory. Permission to make other use of it, he never permits, unless it be in the way all sin is tolerated.

*Opportunities* for doing good, improved or slighted, will be laid open by the Judge. Mankind were not formed to pass a life of listlessness ; their sole business is not dreaming ; it is not left optional with them, whether to act wisely and efficiently

or not. God Almighty commands them to do right always, and to act with energy. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest." Every man should strive to leave the world better than he found it.

An account must be given of the *doctrines* held. The Scriptures present us with truth, pure, essential and infallible. Jehovah is their author, and he requires a universal reception of his revelation. "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." Bible truth cannot be rejected with impunity; it must be embraced, or fearful guilt be incurred. Persons are responsible for their religious sentiments. It is of consequence what one believes, for error is damning. To plead that we were under a deception will not avail, because God never deceives us, and we ought not to permit ourselves to be imposed upon by a fellow-creature. The Judge has himself given us two timely admonitions: "Take heed what ye hear." "Take heed, therefore, how ye hear." It will not be affirmed at the judgment that the Scriptures are too obscure to be understood. What in them is essential to salvation, has no ambiguity; even the ignorant may understand it. Men are now wont to plead *sincerity* as an excuse for errors in religion, but they will be speechless on this point, when at the bar of God. Rational beings ought to be ashamed to embrace falsehood, when truth is so clear as we find it in the Bible. May we doubt there is a hell, when inspiration declares, in the plainest words, its existence, and when every expression of divine indignation proclaims it? Why does conscience now sting the guilty, if not to warn them



of the worm that never dies, and of the fire unquenchable? To what part of the universe may the impenitent sinner be sent, if there be no world of woe? Heaven cannot admit an unsubdued rebel! "Ye devouring fires, which the justice of God has kindled in hell, I have no need of the light of your flames to discover to me the miseries of a reprobate soul." As eternal life has already begun in the regenerate heart, so have the pains of perdition in the unrenewed. For every article in his religious creed, each one must render an account. He shall exhibit to the millions assembled at the grand assize, what were his views of the new-birth, of the divinity of Christ, and of all the doctrines contained in the Scriptures. "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known."

*External acts*, too, will be tested on that amazing occasion. "Every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." What accords with the eternal principles of right, will sustain the closest scrutiny of the Judge; and naught of wrong shall escape his reprobation. It may be quite fashionable on earth to lie and cheat, to rob and murder; yet these acts unrepented of, the Judge will punish with merited damnation. The inquiry at the bar of retribution, will not be what were the characters of men, in time, as estimated by human standards; but how did they compare with divine requirements? Moreover, an account must also be rendered of the kind and degree of *influence* exerted by each. Many now indignantly demand, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Then every one shall be made sensible, that, in an important sense, he was responsible for the conduct of others near him.

Without specifying farther particulars, it is in place to observe, that the principle of holding each one responsible for himself to the Judge, must commend itself to the reflecting.

Why should another be arraigned for my sins? Or wherefore should I share the honor of his good works? Personal acts are not transferable. If works of supererogation are ever performed, whom can they benefit except him by whom they are performed? Ah! having done all one can, and enjoying the entire value of his good deeds, he will find nothing on which to rest, but the merits of Christ.

It is obvious that the daily feelings, thoughts, words and transactions of every man, are intimately connected with the general judgment. He, that shall decide our eternal destiny, will omit no portion of our probation, when preparing his final verdict. The Lord "will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts." Possibly every mental emotion and act are impressed on the texture of the soul. Perhaps all our doings are stereotyped in our very constitutions, and will become visible in eternity. Sin, however, is removed from believers, by the blood of him in whom they believe.

Preachers of the gospel do not err in urging their hearers to make personal preparation to meet the Judge. Knowing the terrors of the Lord, they should persuade men to have respect to the retributions of the last day. Though the actual occurrence of this event be in the distant future, it is in one sense near to all the living; for when death removes them from time, they appear before God, and are unchangeably fixed in blessedness or woe. He, who is wise, will surely regulate himself as if expecting to give account to Omniscience. How worthless the good opinion of men, if it be procured by the loss of God's favor. Ah! mortals cannot help us in the day of judgment. Remembered earthly distinctions will do nothing toward elevating the soul to a place amid enduring pleasures. The *titled* in time may be the most *damned* among the lost.

*A Caution.*

From the fact, frequently stated in the Scriptures, that mankind are to be judged and rewarded according to their works, numbers, through mistake, look forward to the bar of God with composure. They are satisfied with their own deeds, and conclude that the Judge will be likewise. It seems to be supposed that what appears good in the view of men, is so in the eye of Jehovah. But nothing will receive the divine sanction of *well done*, which was not performed from pure motives and for the glory of the Lord. The *moral law* will be the standard by which action shall be weighed in the day of final accounts. Works, like trees, have roots, and *these* are essential parts. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Eternity will reveal the fact, that only believers in Jesus have done acceptable service. It will be in vain to expect an acceptance, by the Judge, of any act not sprinkled with atoning blood. To become savingly interested in the Lamb, slain from the foundation of the world, is the first work required of every one to whom the Saviour is made known. A refusal to comply with this command, leaves one unqualified to discharge any other duty, as God directs. Unbelievers, therefore, when judged by their works, will be found wanting, and, accordingly, they must be condemned.

*Disappointment at the Last Day.*

Many a worldling now fancies, that he is doing the Lord service by his supreme devotion to the affairs of time; but the judgment will discover to him, that the amassing of wealth for unholy aims, was not the same as seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Perhaps some misers think that the hoarding of money is honoring the Most High. A class of persons are expecting acquittal by the Judge because they

exhibit a fair exterior among men. These forget that *unbelievers*, not less than “the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

“Vain hope, in patch-work of terrestrial grain,  
To be received into the courts above !”

Hypocrites will stand at the judgment divested of their assumed sanctity. They may have deceived men ; the Judge they cannot deceive. From his piercing search they will not escape, nor will they fail to be driven by him into outer darkness, where shall be “weeping and gnashing of teeth.” All receivers of false doctrines, who now resolve and re-resolve to be saved by the damnable heresies held by them, will learn, though too late, their mistake. Their errors, along with themselves, shall be fuel for fire everlasting. Never, in the ages of eternity, will errorists doubt that it was, in time, of special consequence to be *theoretically* correct on points of religious belief. The selfish, who seem to suppose that earth and heaven were made for their sakes, must then perceive that hell is the only receptacle into which they can be consistently admitted, and to that place of endless suffering they must be banished. Millions of impenitent sinners, displaying every variety of character, are anticipating an entrance into the celestial city, not one of whom will walk its golden streets. “The way of the ungodly shall perish.”

*Christ is Judge.*

“For the Father judgeth no man ; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” John 5 : 22. “Him God raised up the third day and showed him openly.” “And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which

was ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead." Acts 10 : 40, 42. "God shall judge the secrets of men, by Jesus Christ." Rom. 2 : 16. "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." Rev. 1 : 7. He who on earth, was poor and despised, who was arraigned as a malefactor, and was sentenced to death by a sinful mortal, shall appear in the glory of his *divinity*, and summon to his bar the millions of the human family.

Behold yon heavens ; they "shall vanish away like smoke." See the fair earth ; it "shall wax old like a garment." Ages are hastening onward to that grand consummation, when Jehovah-Jesus shall reappear. Millions of thoughtless beings will be amazed at the signals of his approach, and seek, in vain, for shelter from his overwhelming majesty. "The elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up." *Mankind shall be judged.* All ye who believe the Scriptures, "be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." Let atheists and infidels know that their rejection of the Bible will not destroy the truth. The righteous and the wicked having been judged, shall be forever separated ; the latter going away into everlasting punishment ; the former into life eternal. Prepare us, O God, for thy great and terrible day of judgment !









Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: April 2005

**PreservationTechnologies**

A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION

111 Thomson Park Drive  
Cranberry Township, PA 16066  
(724) 779-2111





LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 089 555 6

